

# CHRISTIAN COURIER

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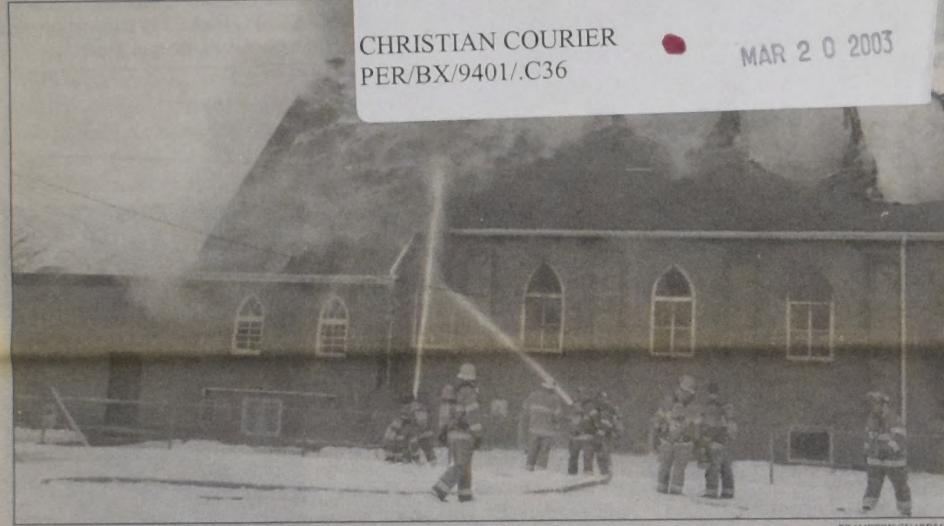
58th year of publication

## Immanuel CRC in Brampton destroyed by fire

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CHRISTIAN COURIER  
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MAR 20 2003



BRAMPTON, Ont. — Immanuel Christian Reformed Church in Brampton, Ontario was gutted by fire early on the morning of Feb. 18. The fire was discovered by a member of the congregation who was coming to make coffee for a meeting.

### \$2 million in damages

By the time Brampton firefighters arrived, flames were shooting out of the roof and the interior was "fully involved," according to the *Brampton Guardian*. A fire crew that ventured inside withdrew when they noticed the floor was extremely hot and "spongy."

Damage was estimated about \$2 million.

The building was almost 50 years old and needed work, but no renovations had been planned. The

church had just raised \$55,000 for a new sound system, but it had not yet been installed. All the archives and records of the congregation were lost.

Pastor Eric Schuringa was in his car when he heard about the fire, but was not sure that it was his church until he drove up.

The nearby St. Andrews Presbyterian Church has offered its facilities to Immanuel while they rebuild. St. Andrews also helped out 15 years ago when the steeple of Immanuel church was hit by lightning, which did about \$1 million damage.

A building fund has been set up for the congregation. Donations can be made to the Immanuel Christian Reformed Church Fire Fund at the CIBC, branch number 01652, account number 2486636.

Firefighters battle the blaze at Immanuel Christian Reformed Church in Brampton, Ontario.

## Faith a key issue for one PC leadership candidate

### Alan Doerksen

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — Faith is not a key issue in the federal Progressive Conservative leadership race, except with one candidate: Craig Chandler. Of the six declared leadership candidates, Chandler is the only one outspoken about his Christian faith.

Chandler's faith will "play a big role" in his candidacy, Chandler tells *Christian Courier*. He became a Christian at age 12, grew up in a Baptist home and is now a Pentecostal. "I know my faith will be attacked," asserts Chandler. "If I were a Muslim or a Jew, I wouldn't get attacked at all."

Because he is being outspoken about his faith, Chandler knows he will be watched closely, and wants to be careful about how he lives.

### Supported by Christian coalition

Recently, Chandler stepped back from his position as CEO of the Concerned Christian Coalition.

The coalition describes itself on its web site ([www.concernedchristians.ca](http://www.concernedchristians.ca)) as "Canada's fastest-growing for-profit Christian organization that brings together Canadians from coast to coast in an effort to increase their business contacts and support the fight for religious freedoms and family values.... We are a political lobby group that was formed as a result of the moral decay in Canada. Our motto is 'Mobilizing Canada's Christians' because Christians have spent years on the sidelines and the results have been devastating to the country."

The coalition's members lobby politicians and bureaucrats at every level of government, and get involved with political parties of every stripe in order to promote their policy agenda and help get their members nominated as candidates.

Although Chandler stepped back from the coalition, it has provided him with half of the \$50,000

COURTESY CRAIG CHANDLER CAMPAIGN  
Craig Chandler with a friend.

he needed to become an official candidate in the PC leadership race. He sees himself as appealing to Christian voters and Canadian Alliance members. But he is not limiting himself to those groups. "We're reaching out to the [Canadian] Jewish Congress," he says, adding, "I have people on the

campaign team who are atheists."

Chandler is concerned about moral issues and "family values." "Let's stop the moral decay," he says, echoing the Coalition's slogan.

### Need to unite the right

That said, Chandler asserts that the need to unite the right is "the biggest reason I'm running.... I'm a proud Alliance member. I'm also a Conservative." One main reason to unite these parties, he says, is to loosen the federal Liberals' grip on power. Chandler wants to work toward an alliance of the two parties.

Chandler is concerned that the recent Bill C-250, a proposed amendment of Canada's hate crime law, could make it "a criminal offence in Canada to preach or teach your views on homosexuality as immoral."

Our federal government needs fiscal responsibility, asserts Chandler. He points to the \$1 billion national gun registry as an example

of government waste.

Regarding the environment, Chandler is critical of the Liberal government's "pursuit of Kyoto that will destroy Canada's economy."

Does Chandler stand a chance of winning the party leadership? He thinks so. "There are no Mike Harris, no Ralph Klein... because there are no big names, I have a good chance." He sees the leadership race as "primarily a three-way race between David Orchard, Scott Brison and myself."

Chandler, 32, is based in Guelph, Ont., and ran federally as a Reform Party candidate in Hamilton, Ont., in 1993.

Lloyd Mackey, longtime political commentator for Christian newspapers, has been following the PC leadership race, and calls Chandler an "interesting" candidate. He has not followed his campaign closely, but suggests Chandler may attract followers of

See PRENTICE page 2...

## News

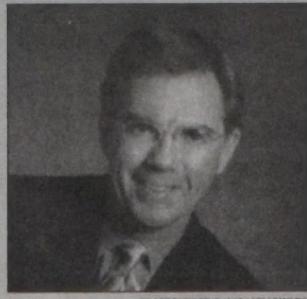
## Prentice described as 'moderate evangelical' in PC leadership race

... continued from page 1

Stockwell Day.

The only other Christian candidate Mackey is aware of is Jim Prentice, whom he describes as "moderately evangelical." Prentice has been a member of Presbyterian and Alliance churches in Calgary, and is either "a committed Christian or someone friendly enough to Christianity that he understands what it's about," Mackey tells CC.

Looking at a possible winner in the leadership race, Mackey says, "It seems traditional logic says Peter MacKay is the frontrunner." David Orchard is another possibility, if he is able to sell enough party memberships. Orchard came in second to Joe Clark in the 1998 P.C. leadership race. If Orchard won, says Mackey, "You would



JIM PRENTICE CAMPAIGN PHOTO

Jim Prentice

have a PC party with an emphasis on 'progressive,' not 'conservative.'"

Prentice is a 47-year-old Calgary-based lawyer and former national treasurer for the PC party. Like Chandler, he wants to be the

one to unite the PCs and the Canadian Alliance, reports CBC Online. Prentice has a well-funded campaign, and has his sights set squarely on Liberal Paul Martin, the man widely viewed to be Canada's next prime minister. Prentice is critical of Martin's work as finance minister, and blames him for "mismanagement of our nation's finances."

### Ethics important

On his campaign web site, Prentice outlines the "four pillars" of his campaign: Sovereignty; Quality of Life; Economic Prosperity; and Ethics and Democracy. Increasing spending for Canada's military is one key way he would like to enhance our sovereignty. On the subject of ethics, Prentice

asserts, "Canada needs a true ethics package, with transparent and enforceable guidelines and an independent, credible ethics commissioner. Canadians must have faith in our political system." He observes, "Paul Martin voted with the government when the Liberals rejected their own Red Book promise for an independent Ethics Counselor."

In 2002, Prentice won the nomination to represent PCs in federal by-election for Calgary Southwest after former Canadian Alliance leader Preston Manning resigned his seat. But when Stephen Harper entered the race as the Alliance candidate, Prentice decided not to contest the by-election "to lower the temperature between the two parties."

"I believe in a big-tent PC Party," he says, "one that reaches out to all Canadians throughout our incredible country."

Prentice is prepared to build a coalition with the Bloc Quebecois as well as the Alliance. Randy Dawson, a member of Prentice's campaign staff, says Prentice "very much sees himself as a coalition candidate" and wants to "create an atmosphere conducive to dialogue."

The Prentice web site makes no specific reference to his faith.

Other candidates in the race are: David Orchard, Peter MacKay, Scott Brison, Heward Graffey, and Andre Bachand (see story below). The PC leadership convention will take place June 1 in Toronto.

## PC leadership frontrunners share their concerns

### Alan Doerkson

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — Moral issues are a key concern for Progressive Conservative leadership candidate Craig Chandler, and frontrunner candidate Peter MacKay shares a concern about child pornography. But the other major candidate in the race, David Orchard, is more concerned about protecting the environment, re-examining free trade, and strengthening Canada's military.

Peter MacKay, widely seen as the frontrunner in the leadership race, has been a MP from Nova Scotia for five years, and is the PC's House Leader and justice critic. At age 37, he is one of three candidates in their thirties (Chandler is 32, and Scott Brison is 36). One moral issue he is concerned about is child pornography. His web site ([www.mackay2003.com](http://www.mackay2003.com)) tells his "disappointment and disbelief as the Prime Minister of Canada and all but two members of his government, voted against a motion to protect our youth from sexual predators and loopholes in the law that recognize 'artistic merit' in some pornographic material." The PCs want to protect children from child pornography, he says.

MacKay is also concerned about high taxes. "Canadians are telling me that taxes are too high; they can't depend on critical services like health care; public safety and security are in question ... and the Liberals are wasting billions of tax dollars" on projects such as the gun registry. Health care and public security are important issues to MacKay. He also wants to address the issue of helping young Canadians get a post-secondary education.

### Environment central to Orchard

David Orchard, 52, is running for the leadership a second time — after finishing second to Joe Clark in 1998. Orchard is a fourth-generation farmer from Borden, Sask., who is a noted critic of free trade, according to CBC Online. In 1985, he founded Citizens Concerned About Free Trade. At a Jan. 21 press conference in Ottawa, Orchard outlined his key concerns.

"My vision of Conservatism has a strong emphasis on the word 'conserve,'" said Orchard at that time. "I want first and foremost to conserve our environment, to guarantee clean air and safe food and drinking water for all Canadians. ... This principle led ... to my brothers and I converting our Saskatchewan farm to an organic operation. All the grains on my farm are grown without harmful pesticides, herbicides or chemicals."

"The population of the planet has doubled in the last 50 years. At the same time we are consuming on an individual basis much more of the world's resources. This situation is not sustainable. This is one of the reasons I am a supporter of the Kyoto Accord."

"I want to also conserve our economy.... I think free trade would be a good idea, if we actually had it.... I am all in favor of free trade, operating through the multilateral forum of the World Trade Organization, but not bilaterally where we give up our leverage as a nation, and are completely exposed to U.S. power."

Orchard also wants to rebuild the Canadian military. "The ongoing dismantling of our military capacity is an absolute disgrace," he



PETER MACKAY CAMPAIGN PHOTO

Peter MacKay

asserts. "The military is the key tool any nation uses to defend and maintain its sovereignty. We can no longer even rescue our people lost at sea or patrol our borders in an effective way."

"My position is that our military must be rebuilt and maintained under Canadian command. Its focus should be the maintenance of our territorial integrity, and it should not be used to launch attacks on smaller countries across the globe. ... I am strongly opposed, for example, to an attack on Iraq. Such an attack would be a blatant violation of international law. Canada must at all times take a position in defense of international law."

### Both ends of age spectrum

Two other declared candidates in the race are Scott Brison and Heward Graffey. Brison, another Nova Scotia MP, is the second-youngest candidate, at age 36. He is currently PC critic for finance and industry. Brison is the only openly gay candidate in the race.

On his campaign web site, Brison explains his three major "policy pillars": fiscal and tax

policy; health care, and Canadian economic security. Specifically, he is promising to:

— Replace all corporate welfare and "failed" regional economic development programs such as the Atlantic Canadian Opportunities Agency and Western Diversification with dramatic corporate tax reductions;

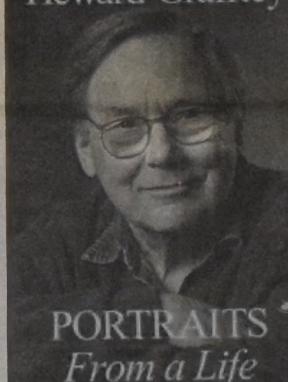
— Restore a balance of funding in health care between the federal government and the provinces while at the same time giving provinces more autonomy and Canadians an opportunity to make their own choices;

— A new Employment Insurance system creating individual EI accounts allowing Canadians to upgrade their skills or to roll into RSPS upon retirement.

Unlike Orchard, Brison is a staunch supporter of Canada's Free Trade Agreements, and wants even more economic ties with the U.S. But he also wants to take measures to protect the environment. In his candidacy-launching speech, he asserted, "I believe that bad environmental policy is bad economic policy, and that next to our people, Canada's most precious resource is her pristine environment."

At the other end of the age spectrum is Heward Graffey, a 75-year-old former MP. In the short-lived Joe Clark government, he served as minister of science and technology. Graffey's campaign web site optimistically declares: "Meet the Hon. Heward Graffey, Canada's next Prime Minister." Even more optimistically: "Heward believes that with hard work, the Progressive Conservative Party will form the next government." Graffey sees himself as

### Heward Graffey



The cover of one of leadership candidate Heward Graffey's books.

"a peoples' populist who will lead a grassroots peoples' party and form a peoples' government."

He believes his extensive political experience gives him an advantage in the leadership race. "He is running because 'Experience Counts' and because 'he's proved his worth,'" says his web site. "He has more federal experience than all other leadership candidates combined." Graffey has a concern about ethics in government, and wants to "bring back civility, honesty and decency into Canadian politics."

A late entrant into the race is Andre Bachand, the PC's only Quebec MP, representing the riding of Richmond-Arthabaska. Although he has entered the race later than other candidates, Bachand's chances are bolstered because he is from Quebec and speaks fluent French, writes the *Globe and Mail*.

## Editorial

## War: of two minds

## Harry der Nederlanden

Over the last few months we've been inundated by stories about the impending war with Iraq in the newspapers as well as on television. Very little of it helps to clarify what it is all about.

How did we get here on the brink of war with a distant Arab nation?

I'll sketch three different routes to Iraq: from 9-11; from Iraq's invasion of Kuwait; and from the plight of Iraq's people under Saddam's tyranny.

## Argument can be made for or against war

An important point I want to make along the way is that on the basis of Christian principles an argument can be made for this war as well as against it. Although I'm still not convinced this war is necessary *at this time*, many of the arguments for war are principial and convincing. Those who make them are not warmongers; they are also seeking peace.

My arguments against this war focus mostly on possible or probable outcomes, so they don't sound very principial. We can hardly know with any certainty the aftermath of this war. Nevertheless, one of the "just war" criteria asks us to weigh the effects of war against existing evils. A difficult assignment.

Some Bush supporters assure us of a quick victory in which American forces will be welcomed into Baghdad like the armies that liberated Paris. Others conjure up nightmarish visions of an Armageddon in which the whole Middle East will be set ablaze, the earth's atmosphere heavily polluted, poisons and germs released on innocent populations, an Islamic jihad triggered against the West (and against Christians in Muslim countries), and the global economy left in ruins, deprived of the fuel it needs – oil.

Should we join the peace demonstrators in the street to condemn the war as U.S. aggression? Or for the sake of global security as well as for the sake of huge segments of the Iraqi people, is it time to enforce the ultimatum given to Saddam with military force?

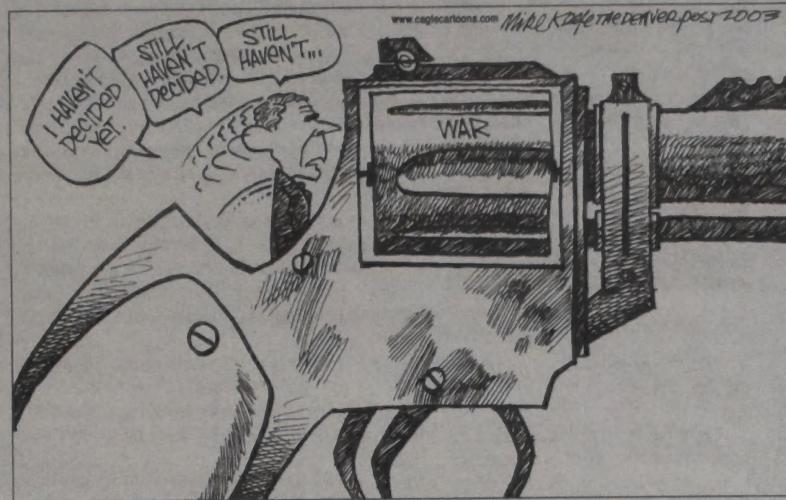
I'll try to lay out the picture as fairly as I can, knowing it will satisfy neither side.

## The link with terrorism

For most of the American people, as well as for this U.S. administration, the story began with the terrorist attack of 9-11. When Bush subsequently declared the War on Terrorism, he targeted not only Al-Qaeda but also countries that harbored and supplied terrorists and rogue states that engage in terrorism. It was on this basis that Afghanistan was bombed and invaded.

When in his famous Axis of Evil speech Bush named Iraq, he and his staff were still sure that they'd be able to demonstrate a direct link between Al-Qaeda and Saddam. That link has not been found. Saddam does not fall into the camp of radical Islam at all; although Islam (at least one branch of it) enjoys a favored status in Iraqi society, politically Iraq is a secular state.

Yet, U.S. politicians continue making the link between Iraq and Islamic terrorists. This time not on past associations but on possible (or probable) future associations. The talk about Weapons of Mass Destruction can be confusing. Usually we think of big missiles like the ones now being destroyed under the eyes of the UN inspectors. But the big stuff is no threat to the American continent, not even to Europe. The really dangerous stuff is the poisons and germs that Iraq has already produced in huge quantities. As Colin Powell said in



DARYL CAGLE CARTOON

his show-and-tell for the UN, one small vial of anthrax can kill tens of thousands of Americans if put in the hands of terrorists.

Moreover, there is convincing evidence that Saddam has been trying to develop a nuclear capability. Under the present inspection regime he may not be able to develop the missiles to send nuclear bombs across the Atlantic, but small, dirty nuclear bombs could be given to terrorists to plant in an American city, where they could kill hundreds of thousands.

Many sneer at the U.S. insistence that Iraq poses a threat to U.S. security, pointing to the fact that much of the Iraqi war machine was destroyed during the Gulf War and the Scud missiles were destroyed under UN inspections (in fact, more than by U.S. bombing). However, if Saddam is truly the madman some say he is, he could create such havoc in the Middle East that the flow of oil would stop. If that happened, not only would the U.S. economy be threatened but that of Europe as well. This wouldn't just hurt the multinational corporations and the investments of the rich, it would hurt the poor most of all. People would die.

But here the link with terrorism is all in the realm of possibility; the direct link has been displaced by scary scenarios of what *might* happen. Is that a sound basis for declaring war on another country?

## Before 9-11: Iraq on parole

America's showdown with Iraq did not, of course, begin with 9-11. It really began with Iraq's invasion of Kuwait some 12 years ago. After Saddam's forces were routed in "the mother of all battles" and in full retreat, the Allies stopped short of showering total destruction on Baghdad, fearing the complete destabilization of the region. Saddam agreed to peace terms laid down by a UN resolution that provided for his complete disarmament from weapons of mass destruction under the supervision of UN inspectors. Trade sanctions were also put in place to pressure him to comply and to keep out material for making weapons. Iraq was on parole.

The Allies of the Gulf War that evicted Saddam from Kuwait had actually been

brought together by a considerable amount of American bullying at that time, too. The Europeans showed no great inclination to take on Saddam. If it hadn't been for the U.S., Saddam would probably have built himself a couple of spacious palaces in Kuwait by now.

Counting on the "softness" of the West, Saddam soon began playing games with the UN inspectors until, unable to do their job, they withdrew in frustration. Saddam also diverted a large share of oil income that should have been used for the good of his people, aggravating the effect of the sanctions on them. The West was thereby put in the quandary of enforcing sanctions that had no effect on Saddam and his troops but that was killing innocent Iraqi babies.

## UN resolutions all to no effect

The UN meanwhile passed resolution after resolution ordering Saddam to comply with the conditions of its parole – all to no effect. When, instead of unilaterally attacking Iraq as part of the War on Terror, Bush turned to the UN, it was to once again insist that Europe and the rest of the world turn its talk about international law into reality. The original resolution had an "or else" clause in it. Saddam has counted on the fact that the West draws a line in the sand only to erase it and draw yet another line, one step back.

Seen from this timeline, the UN has a legal basis for enforcing the disarmament of Iraq by military force (if, indeed, the UN serves as a global lawgiver –

*Continued on page 4...*

TORONTO		2003	AMSTERDAM		
Via		Martinair	Adult	Senior/ Youth	Child
Dates			739	699	599
Apr. 14, 15			759	719	619
Apr. 21, 22, 28, 29			789	749	639
May 05, 06, 12, 13			809	769	639
May 17, 19, 20, 24, 26, 27, 31			839	799	659
June 02, 03, 07, 09, 10, 14			859	819	699
June 16, 17, 21			919	879	759
June 23, 24, 28, 30			959	919	779
July 01, 05, 07, 08, 12			979	939	779
July 14, 15, 19, 21, 22, 26, 28, 29			979	939	779
Aug. 02, 04, 05, 09, 11, 12			979	939	779
Aug. 16, 18, 19, 23, 25, 26, 30			979	939	779
Sep. 01, 02, 05, 08, 09, 13			899	839	689
Sep. 15, 16, 20, 22, 23, 27, 29, 30			839	799	639
Oct. 04, 06, 07, 11, 13, 14, 18			739	699	599
Oct. 20, 21			699	659	599

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## Editorial (continued)

## War: of two minds

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a proposition even the U.S. may not accept). However, then the U.S. may not go it alone. It may not claim to enforce a resolution passed by the UN and flout the authority of the UN at the same time. Still, the question remains, what good are UN resolutions if no one is not willing to back them with action?

But does this mean we should be calling on the UN to sanction military action against Saddam?

### Who are the peacemakers?

It is gratifying to see that most people in the West no longer see war as an adventure, and that they shrink back not just from risking their own lives but also the lives of another race. This hasn't always been the case. However, according to interviewers, many of those who marched for peace want peace primarily for themselves. It's a case of hear no evil, see no evil, speak no evil. As long as the tyrant isn't too blatant about his extermination and torture of people and doesn't threaten us, many peace marchers are willing to call his regime peaceful.

The defenders of the just war tradition would argue that a tyrant like Saddam is waging war on his own people, for he has killed and tortured thousands. To take up arms to help a neighbor when that is the only way to save him is to show love to him as well as to God — so argue Christians like Chuck Colson, Jean Bethke Elstain and George Weigel. They all draw on the principles of the "just war" tradition (see Kwantes, p. 17).

"Not going to war can be a tragedy, just as going to war can be a tragedy," Elstain said in a recent speech, pointing

to Bosnia and the inaction in Rwanda. Elstain argues that the Iraqi people — "stripped of basic human and political rights, assaulted, gassed, tortured and slaughtered — can make a moral claim on foreign powers for armed intervention." She has met with Iraqi dissidents and political refugees and listened to their stories of dismemberment and rape. "We can't just keep averting our gaze," she said. "You've at least got to acknowledge that if we don't act, it has to be with moral regret."

To frame the present debate in terms of doves vs. hawks or peacemakers vs. warmongers is, for the most part, inaccurate. "Just war" advocates, too, want peace, but not peace at any price. Indeed, sitting by while people are being butchered when there is something we can do for them is not peace at all.

Those who react to Saddam by exclaiming, "But how does he threaten *our* peace and security?" are, in this view, not peacemakers at all; they are simply denying any responsibility for innocent neighbors who have no peace but who live under a reign of terror.

The Christian tradition teaches that government has been given the power of the sword by God to uphold the good order and justice that enables us to live good and godly lives. To do so it must sometimes wield that sword to defend innocents, that is, those who cannot defend themselves.

### Time and patience

Having said all this, I am not in favor of declaring war on Iraq at this time. That does not put me at odds on a principal level with those brothers and sisters who believe it is necessary to stop Saddam now to end his reign of terror over his people and to keep him from achieving greater potential for evil in the future.

However, I believe the time is (not yet) critical. Although it is true that Saddam has played with the UN inspectors over the last decade, and continues to be unco-operative, the inspection regime — backed by the threat of force and sanctions — has greatly weakened Iraq's power to commit aggression against its neighbors. In the "just war" tradition, war is always a weapon of last resort to be used only when every other option has been exhausted. However frustrating it is to deal with a deceptive and unco-operative dictator, for the sake of the Iraqi people we must continue to exercise patience and stay the course.

This does not address the danger that Saddam might pass off biological or chemical weapons to Al-Qaeda. However, the two sides are so fundamentally opposed in their beliefs that it is highly unlikely they will ever work together. Still, what will keep Saddam "honest" on this score is the threat of swift and serious retaliation. As I see it, inspection does not take the (U.S. or European) military out of the picture at all; it only puts them in the wings. But maybe they'll never have to step out of the wings.

Although Saddam may not have destroyed all his biological and chemical weapons, there is less chance he will use them under inspections than if he is attacked.

The UN probably has a legal basis for using military force to compel Saddam to destroy his weapons or even to remove him, for the U.S. is probably right that he is "in material breach" of the UN resolution requiring him to help the inspectors. But the authority of the UN is not undone if it uses other ways than war to keep Saddam in check. Quite the contrary: that's the very reason for its existence.

If we, the friends and allies of the U.S., don't want the U.S. to act as the global policeman, however, we must show that we are serious about enforcing UN resolutions. For us to pretend to be concerned about international law (in contrast to big bully Bush) when we don't enforce the law unless the U.S. starts beating the war drum is hypocrisy. The U.S. has merely stepped into a vacuum we've created by our indifference and/or lack of backbone.

### War and its consequences

If I were convinced that the U.S. and its allies could invade Iraq and, without prolonged fighting and without great

collateral damage, eliminate Saddam, and also replace his tyranny with a form of government that would enable all Iraqis to live in relative freedom, and that the U.S. would be faithful to its promise to help reconstruct the economy and infrastructure of Iraq, I might be tempted to say, "Do it!"

### The threat Iraq poses is not imminent

I'm still not sure that it would be a good precedent. It would be, in Michael Walzer's words, not a *preemptive* war but a *preventive* war. The threat Iraq poses is not imminent; it has not been shown that Saddam is about to attack anyone. That is merely a distant possibility. May any country invade another on the suspicion that it is preparing someday to attack it? That is hardly a good basis for international order.

In addition, wars seldom go the way generals expect them to. The trust of the U.S. in the precision of its bombs is exaggerated. I fear there will be a great loss of life — not just of soldiers' lives but of civilian lives as well. And the damage to things should not be discounted, for these are what sustain and shelter human life.

We have seen examples (Yugoslavia) of what can happen to a country when a strong regime is toppled: it can disintegrate into warring factions and chaos. It is very, very difficult to give any country the precious gift of good government, and I'm not even thinking here of a stable democracy.

To keep the country from falling into chaos, the U.S. will have to set up military rule. But how long will the Iraqis tolerate being bossed around by foreigners who don't understand them and who don't speak their language? Even the Kurds and Shi'ites will not put up with that for long.

Some with an apocalyptic frame of mind sketch scenarios in which Saddam inflicts huge damage not only on his own oil fields but also on those in surrounding countries. Even if he doesn't resort to chemical or biological weapons against invading troops, destroying the oil wells will throw the global economy into a tailspin from which it will not recover for a long time.

If unemployment climbs well into the double digits in the U.S. and other Western countries, will we keep pouring millions of dollars into Iraq to rebuild it? No Western democracy can muster that kind of long term commitment. Voters are too fickle.

Moreover, if we fail to make life better for Arabs in the region, if they are left to feel that they've been subjugated and exploited, then we will have sown the seeds of even more terrorism in the future.

### Clean hands, dirty hands

In summary, I believe that attacking Iraq at this time is not in accordance with "just war" principles because a) it would be a *preventive* strike, and b) there is a great likelihood that it will not improve the lot of those we are seeking to help but, on the contrary, further degrade the conditions that sustain life and make it good.

But my judgment on this issue is not more godly, more rooted in Scripture, than the judgment of those who are convinced that for real peace to happen we must first taste the bitter, bitter pill of war. If our leaders decide that is the route we must go, I will not take to the street to call them baby-killers or imperialists. I will not wash my hands claiming innocence and a higher virtue. When we elect men and women to office, the ultimate responsibility we put in their hands is that of the sword, the power to take life. Sometimes they will have to use that power, however great their reluctance. And their hands will be stained with blood.

Even if I don't agree with them, I will not run into the street crying, "Shame!" I will support my leaders and military men with prayer, and I will not seek to impede them in their duties, for the faster this war, which now seems imminent, is over, the better for the people of Iraq and for the soldiers fighting in it.

God have mercy.

## Christian Courier

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Founded in 1945

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### EDITORIAL TEAM & PRODUCTION STAFF

**Editor:** Harry der Nederlanden [editor@christiancourier.ca](mailto:editor@christiancourier.ca)  
**Journalist, Layout Designer:** Alan Doersken [journal@christiancourier.ca](mailto:journal@christiancourier.ca)  
**Circulation:** Rose der Nederlanden [subscriptions@christiancourier.ca](mailto:subscriptions@christiancourier.ca)  
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## Letters

## Moral clarity needed on cloning issue

Abram Huyser-Honig writes that when it comes to the new reproductive technologies, "it's hard to find a balanced account of what's really going on" ("Promise outweighs perils of stem cell research, says speaker," Feb. 17). However, such an approach is offered by one Prof. Mark Hughes, esteemed genetics researcher and recent speaker at Calvin College. I would contend that what is needed on these issues is not a "balanced account," but moral clarity. And moral clarity was evidently lacking in Prof. Hughes' speech at Calvin.

Your correspondent reports that Prof. Hughes is a proponent of harvesting human embryos left over from fertility treatments for stem cells, which might be used in the treatment of various diseases and conditions. Hughes (who of course is not alone) believes that since these embryos have already been created, they might as well be put to some use.

## Argument has a seductive appeal

This argument has a seductive appeal but is ultimately incompatible with the high view of human life taught in the Scriptures (see Gen. 1:27, Ex. 20:13, Psalm 139) and professed by the church. When stem cells are removed from a human embryo, the embryo

dies. This constitutes the deliberate taking of human life. And human life it is, containing 23 chromosomes from each parent (as do you and I) and the potential to develop into a full human person. You and I were embryos once.

## Treating life as industrial raw material

To argue that "such an embryo will die anyway and might as well be put to some use" is to view human life through a utilitarian lens — to treat life as industrial raw material, as a means to an end. It is to deny that embryos have dignity and meaning in their own right, because they are made in the image of God. It is also to place us on a dangerous path toward other sinister practices, including cloning.

The article talks up the "exciting" potential of embryonic stem cells but fails to mention advances in adult (non-embryonic) sources of stem cells. Adult stem cells from bone marrow, brain tissue and umbilical cord blood are being used *now* in the treatment of Parkinson's, multiple sclerosis, leukemia and other conditions. By contrast, embryonic stem cell therapies are largely hypothetical, and are clouded by risks of immune rejection and tumor formation (the

latter, experienced in animal models and in at least one human trial).

As in the U.S., Canadians are having their own public debate about reproductive technologies and embryonic research. Bill C-13, *An Act Respecting Assisted Human Reproduction* would prohibit human reproductive and research (therapeutic) cloning, but would permit the use of embryos left over from fertility treatments for stem cell research and the creation of embryos for reproductive research.

This bill has at times been defended as offering a "balance" (that word again) between the more permissive framework in the U.K. (which allows therapeutic cloning) and the more restrictive legislation in the U.S. (public funds for research on limited embryonic cell lines). Federal Health Minister Anne McLellan defended the use of spare embryos for stem cell research stating bluntly, "Do you know what happens to these embryos? They end up in the garbage."

Pro-life groups are mobilizing concerned Canadians to contact their MPs to support amendments currently before the House —

including one that would prohibit all embryonic harvesting — or oppose the bill. Pro-life parliamentarians are faced with a difficult choice between supporting flawed legislation to put in place some limits where a vacuum now exists or opposing a bill which would render legitimacy to activities which undermine human dignity and life.

What to do with those orphan embryos? One option available in the U.S. is to place them for adoption for infertile couples. Another, perhaps preferable course, would be to let them die a natural death and be "returned to the ground." We should probably also seriously reconsider the fertility treatments that produce these embryos in the first place.

Prof. Hughes counseled his listeners at Calvin College to "think less with hysteria and more with our heads" on reproductive and genetic research. It's a safe bet that "hysteria" here can be equated with pro-life views. For our own part, let's reflect and act with both heart and head, in prayer and submission to the Creator of life.

Eric Hogeterp,  
Ottawa, Ont.

## Balanced reporting on Charles Krauthammer

Re: Charles Krauthammer, speaker at Calvin, I was encouraged to read that Charles Krauthammer spoke at the January Calvin College lecture series.

I have followed this man's writings for the last couple of decades and do not necessarily agree with him in some aspects, but his broad analysis and grasp of world events is something I appreciate. It is a welcome change from a lot of confused anti-American pacifism that postures as analysis. It would not hurt if we reminded each other gently of the fact that some "are more shrewd in dealing with their own kind", which is not intended to assign Krauthammer to the "people of this world" nor claim "light" status for all I and others say and do.

I hope CC will continue to print balanced reporting.

Hank Kuntz,  
Etobicoke, Ont.

## Supporting evidence left out

A comment on Abe Huyser-Honig's article on Charles Krauthammer's speech, Feb 17th issue.

An obvious fact is that when one writes a summary of speech many details are left out, and this article seems to perfectly illustrate this. Here Mr. Krauthammer's views and opinions are presented, but regrettably, the necessary details, such as supporting evidence, are left out. At least, I didn't detect any.

And without the necessary details, such as concrete and pertinent facts, the tone of the article seems to have taken on a pep-rally flavor, full of pro-war rhetoric and catchy slogans, but with little substance. For example, can it be said with certainty that the Iraqis will be happy with the bombardment and invasions of their country in order to

bring them democracy? Has a poll ever been taken? This may sound naive, but has it?

Also, like many diplomats, I also would like to see clear evidence, and not only suspicion that Saddam and Al-Qaeda are somehow connected. Charles Krauthammer's comment about "The threat of one million Americans dying in a flash... is a reason to pre-empt..." (Did he borrow this from President Bush?) especially needs evidence that Saddam had plans to attack the U.S.

I am not critical of the writer; he gave the highlights of what he heard. But we live in critical times; sound discussions are needed to inform the reader of what is actually happening in the world in which he lives.

Tom Abma  
Niagara Falls, Ont.

Alan Doerksen is misinformed (Bibles for Missions Thrift Store article, Feb 17/03) when he states that thrift stores are "run by The Bible League."

BFM Thriftstores are leased or owned and operated by individual enterprises. Twenty-one operating Societies, however, are associated as the "Bible For Missions (Canada) Foundation," with headquarters in Chilliwack B.C.

BFM Abbotsford is totally independent, but all Societies have covenanted with The Bible League to forward their monetary profits to TBL to fund Bibles and Bible teaching materials to the country of each

society's choice.

In addition, societies share used goods with needy people, such as on skid row, the Seamen's Home, local needs and for container shipment to Third World countries. After that there is still a surplus left for recycling.

Noteworthy is that all funding supplied is used for material. The Bible League underwrites the cost of all printing and shipping. This is truly a blessed and rewarding enterprise.

Ken Elgersma  
BFM (Langley) Enterprise Society

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## Letters

## Kwantes responds to Antonides on Iraq

James Kwantes, a journalist and CC correspondent, wrote an account of his visit to Iraq in the Jan. 20, 2003 issue of CC.

In his Feb. 17 article "Some things are worse than war," Harry Antonides argues that a war against Iraq would be a "just war," primarily because of the despotic and evil nature of Saddam Hussein's rule.

Mr. Antonides quotes at length from a Nov. 23, 2002 article in the *Globe and Mail* by Margaret Wente. Wente describes the experiences of a Mr. Yahya al-Jaiyashy, an Iraqi-Canadian who was arrested several times and tortured by Saddam Hussein's security forces. I, too, read Wente's article when it was first published. The horrific and well-documented accounts of fear, torture and repression in Iraq did not come as news to me, but made me shudder nevertheless. I glimpsed some of that fear during my 1999 visit to Iraq, a journey of the kind dismissed by Mr. Antonides as a "Potemkin Village" experience.

### Throw a monkeywrench

What struck me about Wente's article was a short paragraph near the end. She apparently asked Mr. Jaiyashy and his wife their opinion on the looming war with Iraq. Wente wrote, "Like many Iraqis, they are conflicted about the

prospect of war. They want Saddam gone. But they do not want more harm inflicted on their country. 'I want Saddam gone — only him,' says Mr. Jaiyashy."

It's not surprising that Ms. Wente buried these sentiments at the end of her column, for they throw a monkeywrench into her argument that anybody familiar with the evils of Saddam's regime would support this war. In a subsequent Jan. 21 column, Wente derides the citizens of Western countries who marched for peace as "sanctimonious Westerners pretending to speak for" the people of Iraq, as quoted by Mr. Antonides. Evidently, judging from the treatment given Mr. Jaiyashy's views on war by Ms. Wente (dealt with in passing) and Mr. Antonides (omission), peace activists aren't the only Westerners who fit into this category.

### Cutting through spin

I take great exception to Mr. Antonides's Potemkin Village slur and his description of Westerners who travel to Iraq as "useful village idiots" (a paraphrase borrowed from Lenin). It is the job of any journalist to cut through spin and propaganda from those with vested interests to get at the facts, if not the truth of the matter. I take pride in my ability to do that, whether

I'm evaluating the words of the Iraqi Minister of Information speaking in her Baghdad office or digesting the words of U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld speaking at a media briefing live on CNN.

### Eyes wide open

I traveled to Iraq under the conditions I did with my eyes wide open: accompanying a Mennonite Central Committee peace delegation, with the permission of the Iraqi government, driven around by government-employed taxi drivers and often monitored by government minders. I'd do it again in a heartbeat. In fact, I hope to return to Iraq one day, under different circumstances.

Mr. Antonides read about the persecution of Iraqi Shi'ites in a newspaper article. I heard about it firsthand from an Iraqi Shi'ite friend I met in Baghdad and spoke to beyond the ears of any government minder. I continue to wear the turquoise ring my friend gave me on my right ring finger, as a symbol of friendship and, hopefully, peace. Mr. Antonides should not be so quick to disparage those who seek to reach out at a human level to Iraqis.

In numerous Iraq presentations I have made to school classes, church groups and the public, I've never shied away from speaking about the nature of Saddam Hussein's regime. I also describe the Iraqis I met, the hospitality I (and the Americans on our delegation) experienced without exception, and the civilization that exists "between the rivers." Iraq is far bigger than Saddam Hussein, its

people more than passive caricatures of their leader, and the current situation more complex than a struggle between good and evil.

Mr. Antonides focuses on humanitarian reasons for war, and the crux of his argument is summed up in a paragraph near the end of the article. "There is no doubt that war is terrible and brings in its wake grave dangers and risks. But sometimes the alternative, the perpetuation of a horrendously cruel and deeply entrenched evil regime, is worse than war."

In order to verify the latter claim, it's necessary to investigate how horrendous war can be, particularly one involving the most potent military in the history of the world. A report by Human Rights Watch, a respected international human rights group, into civilian damage during the Gulf War offers a good start.

### Near-apocalyptic results

Within weeks of the Gulf War ceasefire, officials from various United Nations branches traveled to Iraq to assess immediate humanitarian needs. They concluded that the war had "wrought near-apocalyptic results upon the economic infrastructure of what had been, until January 1991, a rather highly urbanized and mechanized society. Now, most means of modern life support have been destroyed or rendered tenuous. Iraq has, for some time to come, been relegated to a pre-industrial age, but with all the disabilities of post-industrial dependency on an intensive use of energy and technology."

An Air Force planner admitted after the war that the attacks on the

Iraqi electrical system were partly designed to put pressure on the Iraqi people to oust Saddam Hussein: "Big picture, we wanted to let people know, 'Get rid of this guy and we'll be more than happy to assist in rebuilding. We're not going to tolerate Saddam Hussein or his regime. Fix that, and we'll fix your electricity.'" ("Allied Air War Struck Broadly in Iraq," *Washington Post*, June 23, 1991)

### Iraqi civilians killed

Relying on eyewitness accounts and the reports of journalists on the ground in Iraq during the war, the Human Rights Watch report challenges U.S. claims of "precision bombing" and limiting the amount of "collateral damage." Several civilian vehicles were strafed by Allied warplanes. Other examples: more than 100 civilians killed on Feb. 5, 1991 in a daytime attack on a bridge across the Euphrates River in Nasiriyah; between 200 and 300 Iraqi civilians, mostly women and children, killed in the targeting of a Baghdad bomb shelter on the morning of Feb. 13 (the single worst atrocity of the war, one the U.S. justified by arguing erroneously the building was a military command centre); and dozens killed the next day in Fallujah, east of Baghdad, when a stray bomb hit a crowded market located near a bridge. That bomb flattened all buildings on both sides of the street for 400 metres.

The Christian Reformed Church grappled with the issue of war in Ethical Decisions About War, a 1973 report to Synod. Mr. Antonides mentions just two

*Continued on page 17...*



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## Authority in the family and church

The letter of Arie Hoogerbrugge (February 3, 2003), incites me to write this letter. I sympathize with Mr. Hoogerbrugge and appreciate what he writes. The church is not yet finished with the matter of women in office and may not be for a long time, the way I see it.

### Pronounced as a curse

But I would like to comment on the way Mr. Hoogerbrugge interprets Genesis 3:16 and Ephesians 5:22-24. My understanding is, when God speaks to the woman in Genesis 3, God is saying: "Because of what you have done, this is what is going to happen. He, the husband, will rule over you." This is pronounced as a curse, and it has been a curse on the woman ever since. In this instance God is

speaking to the woman, not to the man. Nowhere does God say to the man, that he has to rule over the woman. I believe, that the man will be held responsible for how he has ruled over the woman. In many instances it was and is not very pretty. I also believe, that in Christ this curse has been lifted.

In Ephesians Paul speaks of the family, where the man is the head and he speaks of the church, where Christ is the head. As a husband I am first and foremost responsible for the well-being, protection and direction of my family, though I need and appreciate my wife's input. I accept that authority over my family and so does my wife (most of the time). That difference in authority between me and my wife is not there in the church. I have no

authority in the church, unless I am an elder. And then only if I serve well in all humility and love. My wife is not an elder, but I would like to think that, if she were, she would serve well. And I would accept her "elderly" authority over me and respect her for it. I think that I would be proud of her.

I do not pretend, that I have spoken the last and conclusive word about this matter, but I have peace with this interpretation. And I would also like to live in peace with those, who do not agree with me. Many of my brothers and sisters, who do not agree with me, have left the church where I worship. That really hurts!

Shalom.

Lammert Bouwsema,  
Calgary, Alta.

## Opinion/Education

## God, Abraham Lincoln and war

Richard Vanderkloet

The impending war with Iraq has prompted me to reflect on how easily we human beings presume divine approval of our actions. To me, admittedly a fairly casual listener, George W. Bush's rhetoric seems full of that presumption. It made me think of a piece written some years ago in *Christian History* by the Wheaton College historian, Mark Noll about President Abraham Lincoln's thoughts on God and the American Civil War.

At the time of the Civil War, the Reverend Henry Ward Beecher, pastor of Brooklyn's upscale Plymouth Congregational Church (and incidentally, brother of Harriet Beecher Stowe, the author of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*) was the most influential preacher in the North. His was the more conventional approach, one that I suspect, President Bush would applaud. At one point during the war he proclaimed:

"I charge the whole guilt of this war upon the ambitious, educated, plotting leaders of the South.... A day will come when God will reveal judgement and arraign these mighty miscreants.... And then these guiltiest and most remorseless traitors... shall be whirled aloft and plunged downward forever and ever in an endless retribution."

## Meditation on Divine Will

As President of the Union, one would expect Abraham Lincoln to be as partisan about presuming God's support for the northern cause. Even in retrospect, it seems so clear that the North had moral right on its side and that the South was fighting to preserve the heinous institution of slavery. So it comes as a surprise that Lincoln was not so sure that God was on his side in the war. In September 1862 he wrote these words in a private piece entitled "Meditation on the Divine Will":

*The will of God prevails. In great contests each party claims to act in accordance with the will of God. Both may be, and one must be, wrong. God cannot be for and against the same thing at the same time. In the present civil war it is quite possible that God's purpose is something different from the purpose of either party — and yet the human instrumentalities, working just as they do, are of the best adaptation to effect His purpose. I am almost ready to say this is probably true — that God wills this contest, and wills that it shall not end yet. By his mere quiet power, on the minds of the now contestants, He*



MEISNER COLLECTION, LIBRARY OF CONGRESS  
The last portrait of Abraham Lincoln, taken on April 10, 1865, shows the sadness and strife the wartime president had to bear.

*could have either saved or destroyed the Union without a human contest. Yet the contest began. And having begun He could give the final victory to either side any day. Yet the contest proceeds.*

## Each invoking God's aid against the other

The war ground on for another two and a half years. Over 600,000 Americans would die in the conflict, a number that still exceeds the combined battle deaths of all of America's other wars. In March 1865, scarcely one month before the war finally ended, and just five weeks before his assassination, Lincoln delivered his Second Inaugural Address, having been re-elected President the previous November. His words to the nation echoed the thoughts he articulated in 1862 and expanded upon them.

*Neither [side] anticipated that the cause of the conflict [slavery] might cease with, or even before, the conflict itself should cease. Each looked for an easier triumph, and a result less fundamental and astounding. Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes His aid against the other. It may seem strange that any men should dare to ask a just God's assistance in wringing their bread from the sweat of other men's faces; but let us judge not, that we be not judged. The prayers of both could not be answered — that of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes. "Woe unto the world because of offenses! for it must needs be that offenses come; but woe to that man by whom the offense cometh." [Matthew 18:7]*

What I like about Lincoln's words is their humble acknowledgment

## Drawing lessons

We all draw lines. We draw lines between Canadians and Americans, between red and yellow people, between family and friends, between fellow believers and other believers. We often talk about getting beyond the "us and them" approach, as it builds walls. This is usually good advice. But without a "them," there is no "us" to distinguish. Without walls, there can be no house. We live as particulars, not universals.

Let me tell you three stories which show how difficult drawing can be, and how important it is to use pencil. The first is of a local lecture I attended in Vancouver given by a Wayne Teasdale, a Hindu-Christian monk and author. He was advocating for a universal spirituality and "inter-spirituality" that recognizes love as the highest form of truth. He wasn't erasing lines, but advocating transmigration through the various traditions. This boundary crossing will lead towards the inevitable "church of the future" — where all faiths are invited and celebrated in its services. There are lines, but they are porous, and they don't really signify any ultimate difference. "Religious bureaucrats have a vested interest in division," he declared, "but God is not confined by religion."

The other story is from the Simon Fraser University Inter-Faith centre. The Christian student groups had a "Jesus Awareness Week" that made the front page of the student newspaper. High profile, especially the debate hosted by Campus Crusade which drew 400 students. It was between a local atheist prof and CC's hired debate man. But the line that was drawn deepest was by a "restorationist" Christian student who wrote in the newspaper calling for the execution of all abortionists and the "mothers" who employ their services. He mentioned a text from Exodus to authorize this capital punishment. He drew a solid line, and those on the other side deserve death. Undoubtedly, he would say eternal death.

## More and more lines

We drew one last September between those who promote and exploit violence to achieve their goals and those who embrace peaceful collaboration as the best way. It was a year after 9-11, and we as campus ministers invited all interested groups on campus to a reflective peace rally in front of the main entrance to the university. It was our goal to bring attention to all those places around the globe that are ripped apart by war, and to provide an alternative voice to the retrenched nationalism prevalent in the media. We specifically invited all the student faith groups on the

ment that God's ways are largely inscrutable, that humanity's vision of God is always limited, while God's view of humanity and of all history is always omniscient. For Lincoln, God is not a house god, nor even a national god, but the Lord of all the nations.

## We westerners are guilty

It may well be that war against Iraq is necessary. We may well be called to support our governments and our armed forces in such a war. But we must resist the temptation to think that our cause is God's cause. We westerners are guilty, too: for supporting a dictator like

## Campus Culture

Peter Schuurman



campus, requesting some words, a prayer, and a scripture reading to help us reflect on a common concern.

The largest Christian student group on campus drew another line, a line between themselves and the rest of the campus. "Peace" means something different to each faith group, they explained, and thus there is no common agenda. They were afraid that the rally gave the impression of a syncretistic worship service that endorsed religious pluralism as normative (despite our clear declarations otherwise). Worst of all, it gave opportunity for the "false prophecy" of Mohammed and the evil spirits of the Aboriginals to deceive students, most significantly weak Christian students. "God calls us to hate," announced the leader to the 150 students gathered at their first meeting. "Hate what is evil." He was referring to pre-marital sex and the peace rally. Needless to say, they did not bear witness that day.

## Drawing in pencil

As our discussion of their non-participation became more intense over the next week, I noticed two more lines being drawn. First of all, between believers who will risk involvement in a public event of global significance and those who will not. Secondly, and perhaps at once most subtly and yet most urgently, the line that runs through every human heart, signaling a battle of spectres and spirits, fears and foibles. The first antithesis we know is within ourselves. The wise draw this line in pencil, and it is a humbling task.

The more we abstract our discussions from concrete situations, and the more we forget our own private wars, the easier it is to divide the map of campus, and the globe, with a black marker. And it always seems that certain people are more eager than others for this task. Why? When some men wanted to stone a sinner they found, Jesus drew lines in the sand. But we don't know what they were. There is a definite line between sin and grace,

and in a world where the wheat and tares are mixed, our pencils ought to tremble. God draws the final lines. We are only sketching.



Peter Schuurman is currently on sabbatical from his campus chaplaincy work at Brock University, in St. Catharines, Ont.

I think the concluding words of Lincoln's second inaugural address suggest a course for us as well:

*With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow, and his orphan — to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves, and with all nations.*

*This was written as a staff meditation for colleagues at Toronto District Christian High School.*

## Church

# Census shows more Christians than churchgoers in England, Wales



FRED MAROON FROM LOUIS MERCIER

In England and Wales, 37.3 million people have declared their adherence to Christianity, even though less than 10 per cent of people go to church weekly, reports a recent census.

## Cedric Pulford

London (ENI) — Despite years of falling church attendance, almost three-quarters of people (72 per cent) in England and Wales still say they belong to the Christian religion, according to newly-published census results.

## England still Christian

"These figures prove as a lie claims that England is no longer a Christian country," said the Anglican bishop of Lichfield, Keith Sutton.

The finding emerged in the results of the 2001 national census, which was the first to ask the 52 million respondents about religion.

The census results showed 37.3 million people had declared their adherence to Christianity, even though less than 10 per cent of people go to church weekly.

David Goodbourn, general secretary of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, told ENI: "It is a wake-up call to the churches when so many people identify as Christian but don't feel strongly enough to be part of a church."

The second largest faith in England and Wales is Islam, to which three per cent of people (more than 1.5 million) said they belonged, followed by Hinduism, Sikhism, Judaism and Buddhism.

At least by their own reckoning

there are 390,000 followers of Jedi, inspired by the intergalactic warriors from the Star Wars movies, following an Internet campaign that encouraged people to answer "Jedi Knight" to the census question on religion.

About 15 per cent of people (7.7 million) declared they had no

religion, and eight per cent (four million) declined to answer the question on the census form.

"Churches haven't lost the ground they thought they had," said Leslie Francis, a theology professor from the University of Wales, Bangor, who chaired the interfaith group dealing with the

census authorities. "Non-practicing Christianity has real implications for how people live their lives, and churches shouldn't give the impression that if you don't practice Christianity you're not part of us."

## Sri Lanka: Violent persecution increasing

### Elizabeth Kendal

AUSTRALIA (ANS) — At the beginning of the 20th century (1900), Buddhism claimed a following of around 20 per cent of the world's population. By the end of the 20th century it was down to five per cent. This is largely because Buddhists have historically been found primarily in East and South East Asia, a region that has suffered severely from atheist (Communist) persecution of all religion. Buddhism has not survived and revived as Christianity has.

Now Buddhism is struggling to regain its position as the historic religion of East and Southeast Asia, and is seeking to re-establish and reassert itself through nationalist politics and aggression.

In Sri Lanka, Buddhism and Islam are growing at one per cent, the same rate as the population. Hinduism is in decline primarily due to mass emigration of Tamils. However, at 3.9 per cent, Protestant Christianity is growing almost four times faster than the population,

despite many Christians having emigrated. Though mainline denominations are actually in decline, independent evangelicals and Pentecostals have experienced great revival and are growing at 20 per cent.

Buddhism reportedly loses some 23,000 followers each year to Christianity. Even so, Christians in Sri Lanka are a small minority and are nearly all located in the main cities.

Buddhists desire to regain their historical pre-eminence puts them on a collision course with the growing evangelical church. Over recent years, persecution against Christians has increased markedly. Churches are destroyed, Christian workers are violently attacked and some have been martyred. There are now moves afoot to introduce an anti-conversion law.

One of Sri Lanka's courageous church-planters is Mrs. Indrani Abeyasinghe (49), who grew up in a Buddhist region in southern Sri Lanka. She became a Christian as

an adult while living away from the village, returning in the mid-1990s with her four children. Since 2001, she has run a house church in her home, now with some 20 believers. She has been threatened and intimidated, and her home has been stoned.

Then at about midnight on Christmas night, 2002, the family was violently assaulted. Only by God's will they escaped with their lives. There is little doubt that the well-organized attackers, who cut all electricity and wore masks to avoid being identified, were there to kill them. The family have left their home and are sheltering elsewhere. They are severely traumatized, yet Abeyasinghe desperately wants to continue her ministry.

*Elizabeth Kendal is the Principal Researcher and Writer for the World Evangelical Alliance Religious Liberty Commission [www.worldevangelical.org/rle.html](http://www.worldevangelical.org/rle.html). This article was initially written for the WEA RLP (Religious Liberty Prayer) mailing list.*

## Nigeria's Christian and Muslim leaders unite in call for peaceful election

### Obed Minchakpu

ABUJA, Nigeria (ENI) — Nigeria's Christian and Muslim leaders have united in calling on Muslims in the country, and in other parts of the world, to embrace peace and the spirit of tolerance.

In a recent message to Muslims, who make up some 50 per cent of the 130 million people in the country, Anthony Oluwunmi Okogie, the Roman Catholic archbishop of Lagos, in south-western Nigeria, expressed dismay that terrorism

was being promoted by radical Islamic elements, making the world unsafe.

### Elections a critical test

The calls of the leaders come ahead of national elections, scheduled for April, that are seen by many as a critical test of whether the process of democratization has progressed in Africa's most populous country.

"There is the need for Muslims to rededicate themselves to making Nigeria and the world at large a safer place for human beings to live in," said Okogie. "God has created the world as a peaceful habitat for all living beings and no one should hide under any form of radicalism or religious overzealousness to cause havoc."

His call was echoed by other Catholic bishops, who urged the separation of religion from politics in a country where some states practice Sharia, or strict Islamic

law. The bishops' calls for tolerance were supported by a prominent Muslim leader. Christians account for about 40 per cent of the country's population.

Alhaji Muhammadu Maccido, sultan of the city of Sokoto, in northern Nigeria, seen by many as the leader of the Muslim community in Nigeria, in a message to his fellow Muslims urged them to spurn acts capable of destroying peace and harmony in the country.

He warned Muslims that unless they practiced tolerance, Nigeria would never find economic and political stability. "No nation can progress if its citizens live in bondage and in an atmosphere devoid of peace," he stressed.

### A sign of political maturity

Former British prime minister John Major last week declared that Nigeria's ability to successfully conduct the April elections would significantly determine the

country's political status among democratic nations.

"A successful ballot will entrench the transfer of power to a civilian administration," said Major during a speech in Lagos, where he had worked as a banker in the mid-1960s. "The extent of that result would signal right across the world that Nigeria, a modern democracy, is open for business. It will signal political maturity."

Anyim Pius Anyim, President of Nigeria's national parliament, in his message to the Muslim leadership said there was a need for Muslims and Christians in the country to soberly reflect over the intermittent religious conflicts that have plagued the country.

He stressed that the only way out of the predicament was for both Muslims and Christians to confront the "monster" that religious violence has become.

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## Church/Agriculture

## Pro-lifers celebrate two decisions by U.S. high courts

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP) — Opponents of pro-life laws were disappointed with two decisions in U.S. courts in late February.

The Supreme Court decided to let stand an Indiana state law that requires women considering abortion to undergo face-to-face counseling regarding the medical and emotional risks involved in the abortion procedure.

The statute was passed into law

eight years ago but has not been put into effect due to appeals. The Supreme Court declined to hear an appeal of the law on Monday, Feb. 24, meaning the law can now take effect.

Pro-choice advocates argued that the counseling would cause some women to forego the procedure or possibly postpone the abortion until later in a pregnancy when abortion can be more

harmful to a woman's body. The Indiana law does not prohibit abortion, but simply requires counseling for the woman considering abortion and an 18-hour waiting period before the procedure can occur.

#### Required to give women information

Executive Director of the Indiana Right to Life Mike Fitcher

supported the high court's ruling. He said, "For the first time, abortion providers in Indiana will be required to give women information about the risks [of abortion]."

According to the Indianapolis Star, fewer women had abortions in Mississippi and Utah after similar laws requiring face-to-face counseling became effective in those states.

A three-judge panel of the Ninth U.S. Circuit of Appeals recently upheld another law supported by pro-lifers in Arizona. In a 2-1 decision, the panel decided to uphold Arizona's parental consent law —

a statute that requires girls under 18 to have the consent of a parent or guardian to have an abortion.

Planned Parenthood had sued to block the law, which passed in 1999, because the organization argued that the law did not guarantee privacy to girls who sought a judge's approval for an abortion.

Judge Richard C. Tallman stated that the law did satisfy two constitutionally recognized rights of privacy — namely the right to make life decisions and the right to avoid disclosure of personal information.

## A sheepish shepherd

I am a better sheep than a shepherd. Even as a sheep I make a better pig. The Bible tells me so. The metaphors in Ezekiel chapter 34 are devastatingly revealing. God's under-shepherds do not promote a quiet pastoral scene. To the contrary, self-centred caretakers wreak havoc on the creation, making life difficult for everyone. The true description of humanity is ugly, and I personally identify. Yet the Good Shepherd comes to redeem what is lost.

#### Bad shepherd

Elected but abdicating  
Appointed but irresponsible  
Consumers, not producers  
Predators, not shepherds

Pigs in the pasture  
Rooting out the best  
Roiling the remains  
Precipitous loss

#### Good shepherd

Deep patience tried to the limit  
Justice meted terrible and final  
But restoration soothes retribution  
Love triumphs over insatiable greed

The Good Shepherd repossesses  
Proprietary shepherd  
Securing a bountiful pasture  
Sheep graze and lie down content

Ezekiel 34 brings to mind the Creator's undeniable satisfaction with and love for what he made. It is jaw-dropping amazing that God would entrust the care of creation to humankind. And wouldn't you know it, God's chosen people of the past botched their assignment.

#### Do God's people today fare better?

Leaping forward to the present, do God's people today fare any better in the care of creation (soil, air, water, minerals, plants and animals)? Are Christians prominent earth keepers?

Urban sprawl and wrong agricultural practices have seriously shrunk the earth's arable land base. Large tracts of timber are gone forever. Significant water sources have dried up or been contaminated. Where can we breathe air devoid of chemicals and particles?

## COUNTRY COUNTERCULTURE

VERN M. GLEDDIE



The creation cannot sustain the excessive demands of our luxurious lifestyle. Who insists on not just one vehicle, but two or more, including perhaps a recreational vehicle? Who must have a house containing many bedrooms, a room for cooking, one for dining, one for sitting, one for TV, another for games, etc.? Who keeps a huge house in winter at shirt-sleeve temperature and air-conditioned cool in the summer? Who readily burns thousands of gallons of jet fuel while flying anywhere on earth? Who weekly loads their grocery buggy with produce from around the world? Who weekly throws out bushels of garbage, a treasure trove to many in the world? Who stables large motorized toys summer and winter? Who is moving vast quantities of earth's riches across oceans and continents desperate to support a wasteful lifestyle?

Who indeed! We, the industrialized nations, have accrued a huge debt to following generations and the poor. Statistics are readily available to show three planet earths would be required to give everyone in the world the average Canadian lifestyle.

Spending patterns don't seem to vary between Christians and others. Or more to the point, we share a religion: self-centred accumulative individualistic materialism. Our riches are gained by exhaustion of the earth's resources and we are near ready to expire under the weight of the waste created.

Over a lifetime I made decisions that launched me as a dedicated consumer. Substantial change doesn't seem possible now. I feel trapped in a situation I deplore. I am swept along, reluctantly now, by society's mores. Is there any way out other than through a "monkish" existence? It is Satan's lie that there is no hope, but how do we live by faith in Canada?

This column was prompted by hearing one more person living in luxury say, "Well, we may have a lot of beautiful things, but most important is that we love Jesus." When God takes back the shepherding, I, for one, do not wish to be in the flock by the skin of my teeth because I have been preoccupied with spending or accumulating wealth.



Vern Gleddie has a sheep ranch near Edmonton, Alta.

## Adventist leader and his son sentenced for role in Rwandan genocide

#### Frederick Nzwili

NAIROBI, Kenya (ENI) — A Seventh-day Adventist Church leader from Rwanda and his son have been sentenced to prison terms for their roles in the genocide that engulfed the East African country in 1994 and the church has apologized for their actions.

The United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda sentenced Elizaphan Ntakirutimana, 78, former president of the church's South Rwanda district, to 10 years of imprisonment for aiding and abetting in genocide.

His son, Gerard, 45, a medical doctor at an Adventist hospital, was convicted of genocide and of crimes against humanity (murder) and sentenced to 25 years in prison.

The tribunal, based in Arusha, Tanzania, was set up by the UN to try those accused of genocide and other serious violations of international humanitarian law. It found that Gerard Ntakirutimana killed two people, shot at refugees, transported attackers and took part in attacks on refugees in two areas.

#### Church offers apology

An estimated 500,000 people were killed in 1994 when members of the country's majority Hutu community slaughtered minority Tutsis and politically moderate Hutus.

The General Conference of

Seventh-day Adventists said it was saddened by the outcome of the trial and offered an apology.

"We acknowledge with sadness that some of our church members turned against their fellow members and their neighbors," said Ray Dabrowski, communication director at the Seventh-day Adventist Church world headquarters in Maryland, U.S. "We are saddened that the accused did not act in harmony with the principles of their church. We offer an apology."

#### Church lost 10,000 people

The church has 350,000 members in Rwanda, a nation with a population of about eight million. It operates three schools, one hospital and nine clinics around the country. The church lost an estimated 10,000 people in the genocide.

Elizaphan Ntakirutimana was the president of the South Rwanda Field at the time of the 1994 killings. In their unanimous verdict, the tribunal found he transported armed attackers to pursue and kill members of the Tutsi tribe and ordered the removal of a church roof where Tutsi were hiding so that the building could no longer be used as a shelter.

Subject to any appeal, the two men are expected to be sent to prisons in Mali, Benin or Swaziland, countries with which the tribunal has prison agreements.

For a quick Letter to the Editor, please send it by fax to: (905)-682-8313, or by e-mail to: editor@christiancourier.ca

## Social Justice

## Stories from Out of the Cold



ANN MARIE ROUSSEAU

The problem of homelessness and hunger is getting worse, but Out of the Cold programs provide a place of warmth and comfort for homeless guests.

#### Sonya VanderVeen Feddema

For the past four years I've volunteered at Out of the Cold, a program that provides supper and overnight shelter for hungry and homeless people during the winter months between November 1 and March 31. In St. Catharines, Ontario, where I live, seven downtown churches, supported financially and with volunteers by churches outside of the downtown core, take turns one day a week opening their doors to needy people.

According to Susan Venditti, chairperson for Out of the Cold in St. Catharines, the problem of homelessness and hunger is getting worse. When referring to the grim statistics, she says, "I have started using personalized words with statistics. Diners, not dinners. Sleepers, not accommodations. In my small way I am reminding the statistics people that we are talking about people." Though totals for the 2002-2003 season are not yet available, Venditti compares the statistics from 1997-1998 to the 2001-2002 season. In 1997 a total of 10,663 diners and 2,473 sleepers were served compared to 2001-2002 when 22,000 diners and 5,200 sleepers were served. She adds, "The feeding increase is indicative of people not having enough income for food after their rent is paid."

#### Getting beyond statistics

The best way to get beyond the statistics is to listen to the stories of hungry and homeless people. And that's what I do when I work my

shift from 8:00 p.m. to midnight. Not only do I listen to the verbalized narratives, I also consider the unspoken tales. Because many of the homeless guests don't want to converse with the volunteers, I listen to their stories of pain, isolation, mental illness, and addiction as told by their body language and interaction with other guests.

#### 'This is our home'

One evening at First United Church I played euchre with two brash, cynical adolescents and a gentle middle-aged man. After several games, the girl and guy began to discuss in sarcastic, bitter tones how little they owned. The mild-mannered man said, "But we have a home." At first I wasn't sure what he meant. Obviously he didn't own a home and neither did they. Then he emphatically addressed the teens, "This is our home. The places the churches have given us. And we have full stomachs." He looked at me and added, "That's what Maxine taught me." I knew who he meant. Maxine and her husband Ray head up Out of the Cold at St. Paul St. United Church. This man's gratitude for what the churches had done for him was palpable. And he wouldn't allow anyone to denigrate the program.

Another evening I sat down at a table beside Freddy, an aboriginal man suffering from alcoholism. Inebriated as he spoke, Freddy described his treatment in the boarding school where he was placed when he was four years of age. Punished many times with an inch-wide strap, Freddy

remembered the searing pain in his hands, arms, and buttocks. Years passed. Fifteen-year-old Freddy was being punished again. He grabbed the strap from the headmaster's hands and whipped the man's face. Arrested soon afterwards, he was sent to work on a farm for two years. Though Freddy was drunk as he told me his story, I believe fragments of truth existed in his narrative.

Many mentally ill people find shelter at Out of the Cold. One woman confided in me that she loved to climb the Niagara Gorge in areas that were off limits. Her other passion was to climb on the trusses of bridges. She insisted the police couldn't charge her if they didn't post No Trespassing signs. When a man walked by our table, the woman said confidentially, "I don't like that man because he hates women." She laughed conspiratorially and said under her breath, "I don't like men either!" Many of my conversations with mentally ill people at Out of the Cold revealed their paranoia, confusion, suspicion, anxiety, and grandiose illusions. I ached to make things better for them. But all I could do was listen and pray.

#### Not a typical family

Once, what seemed to be a typically middle-class family — a husband, wife, two adult children, and a teenager — walked into the church basement carrying black plastic bags. I approached them and asked if they were dropping off clothes for the guests. They were not! In fact, they were guests of Out of the Cold themselves and had just received bags of clothes at another church's Christmas party. They set their mats up in the middle of the room, rather like a pioneers' circle of wagons, a symbol of community and protection. Before the lights were dimmed for the night, the father prayed with each member of

his family, an open Bible on his lap.

Later, a man who claimed he was from Huguenot stock discussed the strengths and weaknesses of Calvinists with the other volunteers and me. He drank cup after cup of strong instant coffee sweetened with numerous spoons of sugar. "Reminds me of my mama," he said sentimentally. "My sweet mama!" I wondered who his mother was. Was she still alive? Did she know that he was homeless? If she did, did she care? When our discussion was completed, the man mentioned that he needed to rest and asked that we wake him at 11:30 p.m. so that he could go to work. We knew that he had no job. But out of respect for him, we said we would wake him.

#### Preconceived ideas about homeless people

Perhaps I learned the most about homelessness and my preconceived ideas about homeless people from my experience with Elizabeth (not her real name) and her encounter with Out of the Cold. Elizabeth suffers from schizophrenia. A few years ago she became homeless for a short period. One day she came to my house at lunch time, famished and agitated. In short order she devoured two bananas, half a bagel, two pieces of toast heaped with meat and cheese, a cup of coffee, glasses of milk, and a large apple. She spent the afternoon with me. I invited her to stay for supper, but told her that she needed to decide where she was going to spend the night. Later, she called the Comfort Inn, but was dismayed to find out that a room would cost around \$100, money she didn't have.

"I guess I have to go to that other place," she said sadly, meaning Out of the Cold. That evening, as I drove her to St. Alfred's Church, she said, "I'll tell you that I'm scared!"

Upon arrival, I parked the car and we got out. Several people were smoking outside the church. The sign for Out of the Cold told us which door to enter. A table with a guest book on it stood at the entrance of the auditorium.

#### Incredulous

A young lady smiled at us. "Would you like to sign in for the night?" she asked kindly.

I stopped short, incredulous. She thought I was homeless! How could she think that about me? Did I look like I was homeless? Quickly I said, "Oh, no, I'm not staying. My friend is."

After spending a few minutes with Elizabeth, I said goodbye to her and walked back to my car. Afterward I thought a lot about my reaction to the woman's words and realized I needed to do some soul-searching. Do stereotypes about homelessness still mar my thinking? Do I think I'm superior to homeless people? Am I smug because of what I own or who I am? Have I forgotten where all the good gifts I have received — mental health, a home, a loving family, work, a church community — come from? These are questions I need to keep asking myself.

The spoken and unspoken stories I've heard at Out of the Cold have become part of my story. I've been changed through what I've seen and experienced.

Is there an Out of the Cold program in your city that could use a volunteer like you?



COURTESY MUSTARD SEED MINISTRY  
Mattresses are spread out for guests of Calgary's Mustard Seed Ministry — an outreach to homeless people which was profiled in the March 3 Christian Courier.

## Justice

# Open season on charities

**David van der Woerd**

Two recent court decisions that could have been overturned by higher courts have now created new law that could spell trouble for Canadian charities. These decisions move charities closer to the centre of the target in the harsh world of litigation. And they raise the question of what charities can do to protect themselves.

Most charitable givers would never suspect that their money could be used for unforeseen purposes, such as to settle law suits against the charity. Until recently, the law stood behind them, but recent decisions have rocked this premise. This could further undermine the already fragile public confidence in the charitable sector.

### Shivers up their spines

The first case, which challenged fundamental principles of trust law, sent shivers up the spines of lawyers who make their living advising clients on risk management. The Supreme Court of Canada, the highest court in this country, has the liberty to choose which cases it will hear. The Supreme Court of Canada recently refused to hear an appeal of a lower court decision in the Christian Brothers case. This was a surprise to charities and their advisors, who were anxiously waiting for the court to correct what they perceived to be a wrong decision. They are now forced to reckon with a new harsher world.

The case involved the Mount Cashel Orphanage in St. John's, Newfoundland, where about 90 young boys suffered sexual, physical and emotional abuse. Damage claims mounted to approximately \$36 million, but the organization had assets of only \$4 million. However, the Christian Brothers had enough assets that were held in trust for other purposes.

### Trust assets not protected

Before this decision, trust law mandated that those trust funds would never be attacked. They were held in trust for specific charitable purposes designated by the donors, and the Christian Brothers were considered trustees, not owners, of the property. Perhaps it was the horrific facts of the case, or the intense press coverage, but the lower courts bowed to the wishes of the plaintiffs, the victims of abuse, who asked the court to make



The cover of a recent annual report from the Bloorview MacMillan Children's Hospital Foundation. A case related to this foundation could affect many charities.

the trust assets available to pay the damage claims.

The lawyers for the Christian Brothers pleaded with the court to invoke an outdated English concept that charitable corporations were immune from liability claims. This was quickly rejected as "defunct" Canadian law. The court then dropped the hammer, proclaiming that all the assets of the organization were open for seizure, including the trust assets, if the plaintiffs could show a connection between their damage claim and the particular charitable trust in question.

### Huge victory for plaintiffs

This was a huge victory for the plaintiffs, which, in light of the terrible facts of the case, many can justify. But in terms of the legal precedent that it sets for any person or organization that holds assets in trust, the decision is frightening.

All donors must now question whether the funds that they donate to their charities will be used by that organization for the reasons that they thought the organization stood for. Without some legislative or judicial protection put in place,

the door is now open for unscrupulous lawsuits that see these funds as a resource to fulfil their ambitions for personal profit.

### Establishing firewalls

Charitable advisors, scrambling to find ways to protect charities from this new risk, have suggested establishing firewalls as a risk management strategy for charities to protect their assets. This can be

achieved by fragmenting charitable organizations into smaller independently operated units that work co-operatively together. This strategy would allow organizations to insulate their assets from attack by segregating the portions of the operations that expose them to higher risks from the balance of their operations.

Before charities adopt this strategy, however, they should first read the Bloorview case.

This case involved Bloorview Children's Hospital (the "Hospital") and its related foundation, the Bloorview Children's Hospital Foundation (the "Foundation"). The Hospital created a Foundation and transferred funds to it. The Foundation, in turn, was to pay interest and capital

to the Hospital, in the best interests of the Hospital's patients. Then the Hospital amalgamated with another hospital, to create the Bloorview MacMillan Centre (the "Centre"). The Centre began to object to the way the Foundation was managing its funds. The Foundation retorted that the Centre had no right to dictate to the Foundation how it should manage its assets.

Before I get to the court decision, it is apparent that this was a very unhealthy environment. Hospitals, and many other charities, have foundations that are designed to support the parent missions. When these organizations are singing from different song sheets, both will suffer. It is imperative that related charities have boards, management and staff that can work co-operatively together.

The decision in the Bloorview case also demonstrates the danger in creating structures that relinquish control of assets.

The trial decision in the Bloorview case was rendered by Justice Pitt of the Superior Court of Justice in early 2002. Justice Pitt said that the Hospital's objective was to create a foundation to divest itself of the ownership of various assets because they believed that those assets would be better preserved by the Foundation and the objective of the Hospital continue to be served. But when those assets were under the control of the Foundation, they belonged to the Foundation, and not the Hospital or the Centre that succeeded it, and there was no basis to challenge the validity of the transfer of the funds from

the Hospital to the Foundation. So the Foundation was free to manage its own funds, without the Centre's direction.

The decision went to the Ontario Court of Appeal for argument late last year. However, before the Court of Appeal could decide the appeal, the parties settled between themselves.

So Justice Pitt's decision stands and makes law on this point. So when charities create separate entities to protect assets, they need to consider that the new organization may have its own autonomy and control. In the future the new organization may make decisions that may be at odds with the wishes of the parent charity.

Neither of these decisions bode very well for charities or those who donate to them. The Christian Brothers decision is especially

problematic. Charities usually don't think along these terms, but they may have "deeper pockets" than they realize and may be fair game for prowling litigants. Decisions like this will surely undermine any confidence that the public has in the already fragile and vulnerable charitable sector, and this could lead to a reduction in giving and philanthropy.

It is certain that the last reverberations of these cases are yet to be heard. Stay tuned.

*David van der Woerd is a partner with law firm Ross & McBride LLP ([www.rossmcbride.com](http://www.rossmcbride.com)). If you have questions that you would like addressed, please direct your questions to David at: Ross & McBride LLP 1 King Street West, P.O. Box 907 Hamilton, Ontario L8N 3P6, Phone: 905-572-5803 (direct line) 905-526-0732 (fax) [dvanderwoerd@rossmcbride.com](mailto:dvanderwoerd@rossmcbride.com)*

# Prison Fellowship faces lawsuits in Iowa

NEWTON, Iowa (EP) — Prison Fellowship's faith-based rehabilitation program InnerChange is facing two lawsuits in Iowa. Americans United for Separation of Church and State (AUSCS) has filed suits claiming that InnerChange promotes religious favoritism.

*The New York Times* reported that inmates enrolled in the 18-month program are moved to a separate cellblock and take part in Bible study and mentoring classes. Prisoners in InnerChange also reportedly get access to large screen TVs and computers, keys to their cells and free phone calls.

"The program is one of the most egregious violations of church-state separation I've ever seen," said Rev. Barry W. Lynn, AUSCS executive director. "It literally merges religion and government. It is unconscionable for the government to give preferential treatment to prisoners based solely on their willingness to undergo religious conversion and indoctrination."

Representatives of Prison Fellowship say the lawsuit has no basis because government money is not used to fund the faith aspect of their programs. Government funding only pays for things like vocational skills courses, substance abuse counseling and job placement.

Jerry Wilger, executive national director of the InnerChange program, said the lawsuits' claims were misleading. Wilger said in-

mates had keys because the cell-block that the Department of Corrections chose to house InnerChange participants had old wooden doors. He also said phone calls were free only in emergency situations, computers were used for educational purposes, and televisions were prohibited.

### Open to all faiths, no faith

"While the program is open to inmates of all faiths or no faith, participants are fully apprised of the faith-centred nature of the program in advance of their participation," said Mark Earley, president of Prison Fellowship.

Similar programs are run by Prison Fellowship in Texas, Minnesota, and Kansas. InnerChange is a good example of the type of program President George W. Bush supports with his faith-based initiatives.

"In some ways, these lawsuits may be only trying to stymie President Bush's national faith-based initiatives. Already they are seeking additional plaintiffs to join," said Prison Fellowship founder Charles Colson.

Colson defended InnerChange based on the program's reported success rate. Colson cited a recent study of the Texas InnerChange program, saying the re-offend rates for inmates who were involved in the program were only about 15 percent, while the average re-offend rates can average from 50 to 70 per cent.

## Psychology

# Three things remain

### Lynn Marie-Ittner Klammer

I remember it perfectly, like a snapshot in my mind's eye. A cold, grey morning in February, a blinding 7 a.m. headache, and a new referral already staring back at me from the top of my desk.

"Now what?" I thought, exasperated with the pile of referrals still awaiting my attention. As a staff psychologist on a hospital rehabilitation floor, I always had more patients to see than there was time in the day. The latest referral was a 44-year-old female patient named Madeline, who was paralyzed from the neck down. She had already spent a couple months in the hospital, and her doctor felt she was depressed, because he often saw tears on her cheeks. As I read the referral more closely, I saw that not only was Madeline paralyzed, but she also could not speak, and it was doubtful that she could even understand what was said to her. I guess I'd be depressed too.

"You're not going to be able to do much with her," said my colleague when he saw the referral. "Just go see her a couple times to keep her doctor happy."

I must admit that my colleague's prediction seemed to be valid. What could I possibly do with a patient who was unable to communicate with me in any way?

### Only her eyes could move

My first visit to Madeline deepened my doubts. She was completely paralyzed. In fact, the only part of her that could move were her eyes.

They seemed clear, and focused intently on me as I introduced myself. I explained her doctor's concerns, and promised to see her again the next day. But it seemed a waste of the insurance company's money to pay me to just sit and talk to Madeline each day.

I couldn't have been more wrong.

Over the subsequent days, weeks and months, I learned just how little I really knew about human communication. Madeline and I didn't need words to understand each other, all we needed was a lot of patience and a little understanding. The rest was easy.

Madeline's body had ceased functioning, but she was still in there, trapped inside. A little effort soon proved that I could reach her. With a system of eye blinks Madeline was able to respond with "yes" or "no" to my questions, and as we spent more time together, I began to intuitively know some of what she was feeling.

Many times she cried with me, and many times I sat and held her hand. It wasn't long, in fact, before

the doctor and nurses began to report that Madeline no longer seemed depressed, but I kept looking in on her anyway. We had forged a link based on feelings more than thought, and I was committed to not abandoning her to those who hadn't taken the time to make the same connection.

Many of our impaired loved ones suffer in similar ways as Madeline. We may only see what's easy to see, what the outward appearance shows us. However, those we love are still there, if only on an emotional level. Somewhere inside that outward appearance, those we love are still there, if we only take the time, and courage, to truly look.

### Why go see Grandma?

"I don't see the point of going to see Grandma anymore. She doesn't even know who I am."

How many times have you heard someone say those words? It's a common statement among those who have elderly loved ones in nursing homes. When those we love cease to behave or think the way they always have, it's easy, although painful, to think they're no longer really there. This is often, however, far from the truth. Grandma may not recognize family members, or be able to communicate as she always did, but she is still there. Some essential part of who she is still remains, can still be touched if only reached for.

"I thought Mom couldn't understand anything I said anymore," said Janet. Her mother had been confined to a nursing home for over a year. "Last week I was sitting with her, just watching her stare off into space as usual, when I noticed the Bible at her bedside. I started to read one of Mom's favorite verses out loud...and that's when I saw Mom smile, just a little smile, but it meant so much to me."

The Bible tell us that "...nothing can ever separate us from his love..." (Romans 8:38). Even loved ones who are severely impaired will often react to well-loved prayers or Bible verses. Janet's mom may not have fully comprehended what was being read to her, but she could "feel" those same feelings she had learned to associate with those words all her life. The love and comfort of God's word still reached her.

"I wish, just once, Grandma would call me by name," said Linda. "Usually she doesn't call me anything, but when she does it's someone else's name. It hurts."

It can hurt to not be recognized by name, but does that really matter? If we think with our hearts and not with our heads, we'll see that it's the love and caring that matter.

not the name we're given. Linda's grandma did recognize her in some way, because she often held Linda's hand. Grandma recognized the connection she had with Linda, the love that they shared, and the warmth of presence. Do the words really matter?

Sometimes there are no words at all. "It was hard to just sit with him each day" remembers Ron. "He didn't know I was there, but I felt like I needed to be anyway."

Ron's father was in a coma-like state for months before his death. "If he could have just squeezed my hand it would have made such a

difference to me."

When there is no sign at all of awareness from a loved one, it can be particularly difficult. Do they know we are there? Does it matter if we visit? Can we ever reach them?

When I think of family members like Ron, and all the other patients and their families I have known, my thoughts return again and again to 1 Corinthians 13:13: "There are three things that remain — faith, hope, and love — and the greatest of these is love." No matter how impaired our loved ones may be, no matter how painful our time

spent with them may become, there is still that unsailing element of hope and comfort that comes from our faith's assurance of the undying power of love.

It was there in Madeline's eye blinks, the sweet smile of Janet's mother, the firm hand of Linda's grandma...and yes, it was even there as Ron visited with his father. Faith, hope and love cannot be contained within our physical shells, but are still there, able to be grasped if only we will reach for them.

*This article was previously published in Liguorian Magazine (December 2002).*

## Of war and peace

*A well-directed word can kill or humiliate, without dirtying one's hands. One of the great joys in life is humiliating one's equal. Pierre Desproges*

Helga's haunted eyes, shallow complexion and hunched over body bears witness to the many years of emotional abuse she has suffered at the hands of her husband. No matter how hard she worked to make things "just right," he continued to rage at her. In the last six years she checked into the local transition home for abused women at least 12 times. On average, she would leave her husband twice a year, every time hoping he would seek help for his problems. Her children are now 12 and 13, and the last time Helga returned home they both refused to come and went to stay with their grandparents. Now Helga has to choose between her husband and her children. With tears in her eyes, she says, "I never thought I would be in this position, all I ever wanted to be was a loving wife."

### The twists and turns of human nature

The kind of relationships we have with spouses, parents, family, friends and colleagues can either encourage us to develop the best part of ourselves or as in the above scenario, they can undermine or destabilize us to such an extent we become filled with self-doubt, confusion and fear and eventually strip us of our identity.

In a French film *Tatie Daniele* of 1990, an old woman mercilessly inflicts torment on those around her. She manipulates in ways common to abusive people: innuendoes, spiteful allusions, lies and humiliating remarks. Her victims seem unaware of her manipulation. They are portrayed as caring individuals trying to understand her behavior and even at times feel responsible for it. And so, Tatie Daniele, the main character, in her quiet, cold and mean way turns the situation upside down by being the victim while her loving family members are seen as the persecutors. In short, Tatie becomes meaner as they become confusingly kinder.

### Leaders and personality disorders

The threat of war has been with us for many months. Ongoing discussions regarding the justification for war versus the possibility of further talks and further co-operation from Saddam has dominated media outlets. In social circles also, discuss-

## Getting Unstuck

Arlene Van Hove

sions eventually turn to the pros and cons of a just war as well as the possibility of ongoing dialogue with Saddam especially in terms of possibly lifting economic sanctions. Furthermore, the *Christian Courier* of September 17, covered two very different and opposing views.

While all of this exchange is good and healthy, I have not come across an item that takes into consideration the possibility that leaders can harbor narcissistic personality disorders that may greatly affect the outcome of any attempt at negotiations. Can we forget the shock the world experienced (as well as the German people themselves) when the atrocities of Hitler, his officers and the Gestapo came to light? Torturing, shooting, gassing and burning people in ovens are not acting-out behaviors of normal people!

### Disorder without conscience

Marie-France Hirigoyen in *Stalking the Soul* writes the narcissistic personality displays at least five dysfunctional behaviors: a grandiose sense of his importance, fantasies of unlimited success/power, thoughts of being unique and "special," belief that everything is owed to him, exploitation of others in relationships, and lack of empathy for others. She further makes clear the principal characteristic of this narcissistic personality: a sense of grandiosity, extreme egocentrism, a total lack of empathy for others and craving admiration and approval. Perversity enters the picture when the narcissist uses and then destroys human beings without guilt.

Helga's love for her husband did not heal him. The same goes for Tatie Daniele's family members. Their kindness made her meaner. Finally, a newcomer appears on the scene and operates on Tatie's level, which ultimately brings her down. A quasi-love relationship develops — but there is "peace." Still, Rudy Wiebe would agree that peace can destroy many. Just in a different way!



*Arlene Van Hove is a psychotherapist with Cascade Christian Counselling Association in Surrey, B.C.*

## Poetry



HAL HARRISON FROM GRANT HEILMAN

## The Heron

Beside a dark hole,  
gray against white ice  
a large oval  
a feathered lump  
perched on long twigs.

It waits,  
sleepy-eyed  
as if lost in thought  
bowed like an old man  
hunched against the cold  
head tucked into collar.

It waits,  
telescoped  
infinitely patient.

Suddenly,  
in the blink of an eye  
the neck shoots forward  
the beak darts into  
the water and out.  
with a toss of the head  
a twist  
supper writhes down its throat.

It stretches tall,  
majestic  
spreads gigantic wings  
and with a lazy wave  
soars away.

Beatrice Vandervelde  
Utrecht, February, 1996

## For Prayer Day

Dear Lord,  
May we come close enough to you  
to feel your hand on our heads  
close enough to hear your words.

We're here to acknowledge again  
that everything we have is from you  
and maybe if we say it enough, it may sink in,  
and we won't have such a difficult time  
deciding what part of it to give back to you.

We often want to pray to be protected  
from drought, floods, catastrophes and crisis,  
but the prayer you gave us to pray  
is that your kingdom might come  
in this world where there is much that we don't  
understand  
where there are things that we fight and question  
like Job.

Your answers to him  
when he questioned your actions  
humble and awe us.  
You asked him where he was  
when you laid the foundation of the earth  
while the morning stars sang together.  
You asked him to comprehend  
that you are the one orchestrating the lightning  
watching when the doe gives birth to her fawn  
or tipping over the water jars of heaven  
when the dust becomes hard  
and the clods of earth stick together.  
Your poetry, Lord, catches us  
close to where we are at  
with our hands in the soil.

We do not understand the times  
you choose to intervene in earthly crisis, or not,  
yet you have made the ultimate  
intervention between us and death,  
bringing life eternal.

Often we haven't even asked  
for your directions and guidance  
for the game plan of tomorrow  
some coaching and some input,  
instead of finitely attempting  
to do the work in our own strength.

Today we ask that we may seek your  
counsel through this year,  
that you will bless the work we do today  
and that you will sharpen our understanding of  
The role we are to play  
in doing the work that you designed for us from  
eternity. Amen

Linda Siebenga



WWW.ARTOFACOM

## The Alabaster Jar

The invitations were sent out  
To come to Simon's lunch.  
Thus, to the banquet hall, they went  
A lofty-minded bunch.  
Then, uninvited she came in  
And walked to Jesus' seat,  
breaking her Alabaster jar  
filled with nard-essence sweet.  
Guests stared at her in disbelief  
as she poured, on and on,  
Anointing Jesus' head, His feet  
'til every drop was gone.  
Its fragrance filled the banquet hall  
as she worshiped her Lord.  
Her "life savings" were drained away  
a price, to her, well worth.  
Her act of love prepared Him for  
His cruel, shameful death,  
But, some guests snarled about the cost  
found it such waste instead.

Her sacrifice is small, compared  
to what price Jesus paid –  
He spilled His blood on Golgotha  
to open heaven's gate.  
The gift He offers, through His blood  
is absolutely free –  
Accept it with believing heart  
and live eternally.  
She spilled her perfume on the Lord  
as He has spilled His blood.  
His love for sinners still pours out  
to make them right with God.

Mark 14:1-9

Louise Smit

## Christian Living

# Why go to church? 16

## To realize the meaning of Sunday

A.A. van Ruler

In the previous articles we have gradually taken into our purview the full compass of the church. There is, on the one hand, the congregation, the element of fellowship within the church; confessing and working, we are engrafted into that fellowship. There is, on the other hand, the institutional element, where the three offices of the presbyterian church order reflect the glory of God and his kingdom.

*When we go to church now, we are sitting at the piano playing preludes of this eternal Sabbath.*

These two sides of the church belong together. Together they make up the full compass of the church. The church is a unique entity like a thing, an object. We can walk into it and walk around in it. That's what we do whenever we go to church and participate in a worship service.

Here I want to look a little closer at the church as an objective entity by attaching to it another entity – Sunday.

### Sunday a divine institution

From one angle, Sunday is a divine institution that came to us through Moses and Israel. It is a divine commandment. But this commandment is not a heavy yoke. It is a gift. Sunday is one of the most precious gifts humanity received from Israel.

From another angle, we can say the Sunday is a purely social thing of enormous benefit to society. Then we are no longer thinking of its divine, institutional side but of its human, social side. The Sunday is a social institution like the church. We are born into it; it was there before us.

There are many facets of Sunday we can explore. Its sole meaning isn't that it is the day for going to church. This may be the focus of our Sunday celebration, but that doesn't mean it is the main thing. The Sunday has other meanings that are no less essential and which are in themselves of great importance for human life and for the Christian life, socially and culturally as well as spiritually.

However, here I want to try to pull together all aspects of the Sunday in that one act of going to church. Look at all those people still going to church every Sunday.

What is it that they make realized – make real – in that unique act?

The first answer is quite simple: they do something different, something unusual. Every other day they go to work, but on Sunday they go to church.

### Facet of the diamond that is Sunday

This difference brings to light a very important facet of the diamond that is Sunday. All the days of our lives are not the same. They are not all working days. Time is not just a continuous stream, always the same current flowing on and on. That would be time without prospect, without a future: a depressing thought – never any change. It would be very boring and tiring, a slavish existence.

The Sunday provides for a different kind of life, giving us a day entirely different from all the others. It represents a regular interruption of time. It gives it a certain rhythm.

It allows us to scan time, like a line of poetry, one accented foot followed by another. The rhythm and rhyme help to connect the words and tie them together into a whole.

Sunday turns time into a song with rhythm, rhyme, melody, tempo and an inner direction. It's the Sunday that makes time what it is. It is no coincidence that Israel, the people to whom the Sabbath was given, are also the people who discovered history. They taught us to live not just like animals in nature but also like people in history. History, to quote Augustine, is a very beautiful song.

A song needs coherence. I spoke of the interruption of time, but Sunday isn't just a break up of time so that it falls into pieces. That's why I spoke of a regular interruption: after every six days there's the Sabbath once again. Or to turn it around: first there's the Sunday and then follow the six other days. Regularity but not sameness. Every day is not identical but neither do the days come as a chaos in which nothing is connected nor like anything else.

### Churchgoing should be regular

That's why our churchgoing should be regular too. If we go to church every once in a while, we will experience time as messy and disorderly. Something chaotic creeps into it. It loses its rhythm and its melody. Faithful church attendance binds time into a song. When a soccer team loses its



Moses Receiving The Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai – 14th century illustration from the Sarajevo Haggadah, Zev Radovan. "Sunday is a divine institution that came to us through Moses and Israel. It is a divine commandment," writes van Ruler.

rhythm, it loses the game.

Our second answer brings out a different facet of churchgoing. People go to church not to earn their daily bread or out of necessity but out of their own free will. Churchgoing is the act of human self-determination par excellence: in going along with many others, a person determines who he is before the face of his Creator.

In this respect, too, Sunday is an enormous blessing. Many people exercise no self-determination in how they spend their time. They are bound by their jobs and by their bosses or by their business. Or sometimes they are just possessed by their work. All of us are more or less tied down by the society of which we are part. We also run along in the rat-race of the historical process.

### Sunday liberates us from bondage

Sunday also liberates us from the house of bondage; it is the *dies dominica*, the day of the Lord: in New Testament language, the day of Christ's resurrection, or in Old Testament language, the day the Lord has given. That's one side.

into, on the one hand, the liberating power of the Word and, on the other, the new bonds of the liturgy?

### Atmosphere of social rest

There are other facets to the Sunday than the social one of freedom and self-determination. There is also the public and even political facet. On Sunday society wears [or used to] quite a different face than the rest of the week. The truck traffic decreases on the highways, and most stores and businesses shut down. There is no morning rush hour caused by people heading to the office or to school. Early Sunday morning the city is so quiet you can hear the birds singing; it almost feels like a garden rather than a city. An atmosphere of social rest prevails.

This public side also has a political equivalent. Since Constantine, the state in the West has sought to pass laws that provide for Sunday rest, the celebration of the Lord's Day, and even for keeping the day holy. It is a striking and not insignificant moment in the Christianization of the state. In revolutionary times, people attempt to eradicate these traces from public life, but because Sunday has been such a social blessing, this has never entirely succeeded.

### Being exceptional citizens

It is neat to see the streets become busy with churchgoers Sunday morning. At that moment these people are being exceptional citizens. Many sleep through it, but those who go to church are upholding a public good, a common wealth. In this respect, the faithful Christian is the best citizen. Just as the pinnacle of citizenship is to participate in the meetings of a political party and so help stir the stew of public life so going to church is the pinnacle of citizenship. It would be sad – a heresy, even – if we supposed that these two pinnacles were not connected or that they were in conflict.

Recreation or relaxation is another facet of Sunday. All week we work hard. Modern life subjects us to a lot of stress. All week at work we are under a lot of tension, like a bow, but on Sunday the bow is unstrung, and we can rest and relax, renewing ourselves for the next week.

Is our end found in such recreation or is it found in our work? That's a difficult question. The decrease of our working hours has always been seen as a good thing. But is it?

There are many people who hardly know what to do with their leisure time. Many are bored and fret the time away. Despair is never

## Christian Living

very far below the surface of human life and many talk about the meaninglessness of life.

It is good to have leisure time, but it's not good to simply do nothing. We must find other things to do, for this alone keeps away the despair lurking in our hearts. "The joy of the soul is in doing."

### Relaxation essential

Still, relaxation is essential, and it can also be found in the worship service. It is a restful time. You free yourself and come to yourself. You find rest. The liturgy of the worship service means, among other things, that you no longer carry the world on your shoulders. In the final analysis the world does not depend on us; this is at the heart of faith and worship.

In the congregational prayer we carry the world to God and turn it over to him. The worship service is a celebration that God rules and a surrender of the reins of world government to God. We don't, as one hymn says, leave all our worldly cares behind, but we leave them in church before the throne of God.

So the worship service has an element of pure luxury. We are there purely for our own enjoyment, beyond all work and all duty. Within limits, of course, for we don't give up our tasks and responsibilities. We don't just pray, we also work. But we'd be missing the sense of life taught by Scripture if we did not bodily experience something of this complete leisure in our worship services.

### A day of joy

However, all this can quickly acquire a hint of passivity, of bending to necessity, unless we hasten on to another facet of Sunday. Sunday is more than a day of leisure and relaxation. This is too negative. Above all it is a day of joy.

We must take this in the most profound sense possible. Who is it that rejoices? Why, God himself, for it is the Lord's Day. He is the one who began celebrating the Sabbath: on the seventh day he rested from all his work.

Even here we must go one step further. The Lord God didn't just rest from his work; he also rested in his work. He looked it over and took joy in it. The Lord God delighted in what he had made and said it is very good.

### The heart of Sunday

This is the heart of Sunday – joy in created reality, realizing and declaring that it is very good. It is the prickle of champagne on the tongue. It expresses the full meaning of our existence, which is to delight with God in everything that is.



REFLECTIONS: A HISTORY OF FIRST CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH (LETHBRIDGE)

*Church members mingle outside of First Christian Reformed Church, Lethbridge, in this historical photo. "It is neat to see the streets become busy with churchgoers Sunday morning," writes van Ruler.*

Only a small fraction of it is our work, or actually it is our work only in a sense, for essentially it is all God's work. And he rejoices in it. This is what Sunday was given for: that we might rejoice with him and rest with him in his work.

For Israel this was the seventh day. But the Christian church discovered things that stifle our joy at the goodness of being — sin, suffering and death. That is why the church also remembers Good Friday and Easter, when our suffering was borne for us, when sin was atoned and death overcome. Reality was rescued from its ruin; it became eternal, that is, it can now last forever. Now that we have been crucified, dead and risen with him, there are no obstacles to once again fully affirming what is, to rejoicing in it and enjoying it. That's why Christians celebrate the Sabbath on Sunday.

But doesn't everything in the world and in life contradict this affirmation? Doesn't everything that speaks in our hearts join with the world and life to tell us that we're sinking into the waters of eternal oblivion? Can anyone experience life like a glass of champagne — unless it's infused with the gospel and the liturgy?

### Eternal Sabbath of rest

In any case, here we have an answer why we should go to church, an answer to make us dizzy and drunk. If true, isn't this an answer to make you wild with joy? Yet, it is an answer that strikes close to the heart of what churchgoing is really all about.

Earlier we glanced at eternity: the resurrection underlines the fact that all temporal reality is essentially eternal, or at least the fact that it existed can never be undone. Sunday also has a facet of eternity. Christianity has always talked of "the eternal Sabbath of rest."

of the time-boundedness that characterizes our existence. Yet, in every muscle of our temporal getting and doing, we know we are destined for the eternal Sabbath.

### Something greater yet

Sunday perhaps contains something greater yet. Calvin, for example, saw in it the aspect of allowing God to work in us. We rest from our own work, from seeing ourselves as the project of our own efforts, as our own creation. Instead of trying to call ourselves into being, we leave it to God.

This has great implications for what we may and may not do on Sunday. It is not a matter of ceasing from all work, for we are, in a sense, always working. The point is that we cease from doing evil works, that we leave behind our sinful ways and bathe in the stream of God's purity and holiness. Sunday is allowing God to work in us.

This is not to suggest that we can in our rigorous observation of the Sabbath attain a purely spiritual relationship with God. That's what some seventeenth century Puritans thought, and that's why they sought to occupy themselves with purely spiritual things on Sundays.

But we cannot have God unmediated in our hearts. We can never have God without his world. It is his creation, the work of his hands. So all divine presence is mediated by some part of his creation. Sometimes we experience his presence more playing football than when contemplating our own inwardness.

This is why we go to church. For how do we allow God to work in us? Through his written and proclaimed Word and Spirit, mediated by his Word. These are the concrete forms in which God — the Creator but especially the Redeemer — works in us.

### What Sunday is for

Let's also look at what usually gets the most attention when we talk about Sunday and church. We say that the Sabbath and, after Jesus' resurrection, the Sunday was given by God to enable us to go to church. That's what Sunday is for. We don't work and things

close down so that we have time to go to church.

This highlights the importance of public worship. As the concrete expression of the meaning and essence of created reality, it is so central that a special day has been set aside for it. Not just once a year or once in a while but every seven days. So this must be a very important activity. If we allow the rhythm of our lives to be set by Sunday, we will get a well-developed sense of the liturgy of life itself.

This sense is easily overwhelmed by the stream of contemporary life. Think of shift work and the production processes that never stop; of the mobility given by the automobile; of the commercialization of sports and our thirst for entertainment. Our Sundays and our worship services are increasingly being crowded out.

But if we lose our Sundays, we will lose the rhythm of time and also our sense of time and of history. Those who lose the liturgy lose the meaning and essence of life itself. Maybe the Puritans weren't so crazy after all.

### Giving Sunday a focus

Going to church gives Sunday a focus, a centre. I've heard people say, "If I don't go to church on Sunday, I feel as if it isn't really Sunday." That strikes me as right on. Without the liturgy Sunday threatens to dissolve into just another day. Perhaps still a day of rest, socializing, enjoyment, sports, going out. But if that's all, it becomes just an empty day.

Yes, we are well rid of strict Sunday observance. There should be plenty of room for play, enjoyment and going out. These are wholly legitimate ways of celebrating Sunday. We can speak positively of them on the basis of the liturgy, for it is the liturgy that creates room for play and recreation around our work. Life is not work. We may, we must also play, enjoy ourselves and go out. But we can only do so in a fundamental way when in our liturgy, in our worship, we give expression to the nature of our work, namely, that our work, too, is playing before the face of God.

### The FIRST CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH of ORILLIA, Ontario

will be celebrating their 50th Anniversary.

A weekend of fellowship, fun and thanksgiving is planned for

May 3-4, 2003 starting at 2:00 p.m.

All former and present members and friends are welcome to join us in this celebration. For more information or dinner tickets call

Andy Mast at 705-484-9976, e-mail andrew.mast@sympatico.ca

or Jackie Taylor at 705-325-0161

## Family/News

## Driving Miss Jessie

Until I had children I didn't realize how intensely we could feel another person's emotions. This past week my 16-year-old, Jessica, went for her driver's license. The night before her test I told her she didn't have to worry, I would do it for her, I wasn't kidding.

Jessica's 16th birthday last March was marked by a snowstorm so nasty that even Grandma and Grandpa couldn't get over here for a visit. But Jess was looking forward to learning to drive. She spent every day of March break in driver's education classes, eagerly anticipating Friday afternoon when she could finally get her learner's permit. On Wednesday that week OPSEU (Ontario Public Service Employees Union) went on strike. It took two months until Jess could get her beginner's. When you're 16, two months is an eternity.

At long last Jess slid behind the wheel and took her maiden voyage as a driver down a country road. Our pickup truck is somewhat large and awkward; with blind spots the size of Minto Township,

but it's an automatic. By September Jess was fairly adept at handling the big GMC. She managed three-point turns quite well, and could even parallel park with relative skill. So she began learning to drive stick in our VW Jetta.

Finding time to practice driving within the average teenager's school/work/social schedule is already a daunting task. Add to that the short, snowy days of a Canadian winter and it's a wonder she got in any driving time at all. Nevertheless, the minute her driver's ed. certificate arrived, Jess booked her road test.

## 'D-Day approached

As "D-Day" approached she grew increasingly anxious. We went out as often as we could in between snowstorms. Big sister Stephanie even took her up to Walkerton and introduced her to the infamous intersection, where more than one would-be driver has blown his or her chance at a G2 just for being in the wrong lane.

Providentially, Jess had a PD

day the Friday before her test. Grandma graciously agreed to lend Jessica her car for the occasion. It, too, is a little Jetta, but with an automatic transmission. The gleam of its showroom exterior is surpassed only by the spotless interior. To lend such a car to one's inexperienced granddaughter for practice driving takes... well... it takes the love of a grandmother.

## Unsuspecting vehicles

So we were able to spend the afternoon parking parallel to numerous unsuspecting vehicles in Walkerton, and approaching "that intersection" from every, conceivable legal direction. It turned out to be the only driving time we were able to squeeze in, because the rest of the weekend was once again stormy. What a relief when Monday dawned quietly, with area roads in decent condition. Jessica convinced Stephanie to come with us for moral support.

We arrived in time to make a few more practice parking attempts and take a last look at the tricky

corner on the main street. As we pulled into the Drivers' Examination Depot, I instructed Jess to back into a parking space. "No way," she balked, "That's the examiner standing right there!" She pointed to a grey-haired man with a pleasant face, accompanied by a teenage boy who looked not unlike a puppy dog bound for the vet's office. They got into a minivan together.

## Nervously waiting

As we sat in the waiting area I nervously drummed my fingers. We giggled about how Jess might try to bribe the examiner, or keep the power locks down until he gave her a license. Meanwhile the examiner and the boy returned.

The young man smiled bravely at his mom. "No go," he murmured. I wanted to give him a hug and tell him he'd do better next time. Jess grabbed my hand and squeezed. "It's okay," I whispered, "Just show the man what a good driver you are."

Twenty minutes later Stephanie announced, "They're back." My heart pounded, "What are they doing? I can't look."

"They're parking the car," came the reply. I listened for the sound of crunching metal. Stephanie smiled, "Mom, don't worry. She's fine." A few minutes passed before Jess stood in front of us, all smiles, "I got it!" We practically broke into applause.

Later on I watched Jess as she pulled out of the yard in our car, driving for the first time all by herself. I thought back to the days when she was a toddler and would stand on the seat of our big Ford van, pretending to steer and making "vroom-vroom" noises. And it occurred to me, now that the nervousness had passed, how I felt almost as proud and excited at my daughter's accomplishment as she

did. Sometimes parenthood can be a lot of fun.

**Heidi Vander Slikke**  
lives in Harriston, Ont.



## Intangible

## Things

Heidi Vander Slikke



## THE BACK TO GOD HOUR



## English Radio:

## FROM COAST

## Television:

## Back to God Hour

## TO COAST

## BRITISH COLUMBIA

Burns Lake - CFLD	9:15 am	1400
Osoyoos - CJOR	8:00 am	1490
Penticton - CKOR	8:00 am	800
Port Alberni - CJAV	7:00 pm	1240
Prince George - CIRX	7:00 am	94.3
Princeton - CHOR	8:00 am	1400
Smithers - CFBV	9:15 am	1230
Summerland - CHOR	8:00 am	1450
Vernon - CJIB	9:30 pm	940

## NEW BRUNSWICK

Saint John - CHSJ	9:00 am	94.1
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## ALBERTA

Brooks - CIBQ	8:30 am	1340
Ft. McMurray - CJOK	8:30 am	1230
High River - CHRB	6:30 pm	1140
Edmonton - CJCA	6:00 pm	930
Westlock - CFBK	7:30 am	1370

## SASKATCHEWAN

Estevan - CJSL	8:00 am	1280
Weyburn - CFSL	8:00 am	1190

## MANITOBA

Altona - CFAM	9:30 am	950
Steinbach - CHSM	9:30 am	1250
Winnipeg - CKJS	9:00 am	810

## ONTARIO

Atikokan - CFAK	9:30 am	1240
Chatham - CFCO	6:30 am	630
Fort Frances - CFOB	9:30 am	640
Fort Frances - FM	7:30 am	93
Guelph - CJOY	8:30 am	1460
Hamilton - CHAM	7:30 am	820

## KIDS CORNER RADIO

Drayton Valley AB - CIBW	8:30 am	Sunday 92.9 FM
Nordeg AB - CHBW	8:30 am	Sunday 93.9 FM
Rocky Mtn. House AB - CHBW	8:30 am	Sunday 94.5 FM
Prince Rupert BC - CJRN	10 am	Saturday 100.7 FM

Our Address: 3475 Mainway PO Box 5070 Stn LCD1 Burlington ON L7R 3Y8

## 50th Anniversary

Walking with God through the years.

## BETH-EL CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH

365 Queen St. E. Acton, Ontario

hopes D.V. to celebrate its 50th anniversary on Saturday and Sunday May 10 & 11, 2003.

Former pastors and members are invited to join us on Saturday from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. for a Social Hour, to be followed by a banquet and evening program. Saturday's events held at the Curling Club on Churchill Rd. 1/2 mile N. of the church.

On Sunday a special thanksgiving service will be held. Call for further information 519-853-0991 or e-mail [kenk@maple.ca](mailto:kenk@maple.ca) RSVP for banquet before April 20th. A limited number of anniversary books will be available.



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## News Comment/Letter

**'Justice shall flourish, and peace, till the moon fails'**

The following is a letter from the Canadian Council of Churches to Prime Minister Jean Chrétien:

**Dear Prime Minister Chrétien:**

We write as Christian leaders in many communities in Canada to encourage you in the pursuit of peace in relation to the crisis over Iraq. We pray with people around the world for the human community, that God will make us all instruments of peace. We pray with the psalmist for God's promise, that leaders will emerge in whose days justice shall flourish, and peace, till the moon fails (Psalm 72:7).

**Vain hope of security**

We share the concern of millions at the relentless efforts to mobilize the world for another war in the vain hope that it will bring peace and security. We fear that the combination of the Iraqi government's intransigence and the war preparations of the American and British governments will inflict deadly consequences on the people of Iraq. We implore you to redouble Canada's efforts to prevent

this war.

We are aware that the regime of Saddam Hussein has led Iraq on paths of violence and defiance of international standards that protect human rights and that prohibit the acquisition and use of weapons of mass destruction. This must be condemned, as must the readiness of Washington and London to resort to violence. Neither are means to sustainable disarmament and peace.

Despite the gravity of this situation, we see hope as people the world over express grave concern about a potential war and its devastation. We are encouraged by the tens of thousands of Canadians who have endorsed "Prepare for Peace in Iraq", the Canadian churches' statement that declares, "war is not the answer!" Your office has received weekly deliveries of the names of people who have signed this statement.

We are grateful that you and your government continue to seek and support alternatives to war and to insist that decision making in this crisis must be collective, not

unilateral, through the United Nations. Still, we must impress upon you at this time our firm belief that war on Iraq, even with explicit Security Council authorization, would be the worst option.

In our letter of Sept. 25, 2002, we strongly urged attention to alternatives, especially a renewal of the inspections process. We are therefore enormously heartened that, through the United Nations, the inspections process has been renewed. It represents an important part of a credible strategy and alternative to war. It appears to be making a significant impact.

**Danger would increase**

We understand and respect the concern about Iraq's possible possession of weapons of mass destruction and whether it has, or might acquire, the means to use them against its own people and its neighbors. However, as long as inspectors are active in Iraq it will not be possible for the regime to undertake such activities without being detected.

In as much as there is a

continuing danger that chemical and biological weapons which are not accounted for could be diverted to non-state terrorist organizations, it must be recognized that such a danger would increase, not decrease, in the context of the unanticipated consequences of war.

While the inspections process is not perfect, it is now fulfilling the most urgent requirement: providing credible assurance to the international community that there is not an imminent threat of Iraqi use of weapons of mass destruction.

In light of this, there is no justification for choosing war when an alternative to the use of military force is already working to provide verification and containment.

The need now is to continue with the inspections and to set up the "Ongoing Monitoring and Verification" process as mandated by the UN Security Council. This must remain in place until all weapons of mass destruction have been accounted for and destroyed, until the Government of Iraq permanently disavows such weapons, and until the world community is

confident that its disavowal is credible.

We ask you to remind the international community to remember first the safety and well-being of the people of Iraq. They have suffered much under the present regime. The rest of the world, as the churches' joint statement puts it, must support them with new vigor in their struggle to free themselves from an oppressive regime, "not with more bombs and missiles, but with sustained moral, political and material support" toward the achievement of human rights, peace and security.

Therefore, we again appeal to you and the UN Security Council to say an unambiguous "no" to war on Iraq, and a clear "yes" to building on the current process. To sweep aside hard-won achievements in favor of war would be a travesty of justice and a tragedy of frightening proportions.

We recognize that this is a time of immense pressure and reflection for you and your colleagues. Please be assured of our continuing prayers and support.

**Kwantes responds to Antonides on Iraq**

... continued from page 6

positions on war, pacifism and just war theory. But the Synod report mentions a third approach, militarism.

**Seeking revenge**

"On the other side from pacifism, and scarcely of the same moral quality, is militarism. Where militarists are not, in Hitler's fashion, plainly murderous and imperialistic, they are at least obsessively interested in and delighted with their own nation's striking capability and hair-trigger readiness for retaliation. Where militarists do not urge blatant aggression, they often urge, at least, not a measured defense, but merciless annihilation of the enemy and the enemy's children. Where militarists do not seek imperialistic invasion of the enemy's land, they may still seek, on defense, not justice but revenge. Though, to the great shame of the name of our Lord, the Lord's cross has sometimes appeared in the front rank of militarists, it should hardly need saying that the truculence and glorying in might of militarism is distinctly foreign to the followers of the Prince of Peace." Amen.

The Synod report says the best Christian answer to the question of war-making is the just war tradition — under extremely strict guidelines. The report recom-

mends Christians ask the following questions of a war to determine if it fits just war principles:

- a. Is our nation the unjust aggressor?
- b. Is our nation intentionally involved for economic advantage?
- c. Is our nation intentionally involved for imperialistic ends, such as the acquisition of land, natural resources, or political power in international relations?
- d. Has our nation in good faith observed all relevant treaties and other international agreements?
- e. Has our nation exhausted all peaceful means to resolve the matters in dispute?
- f. Is the evil or aggression represented by the opposing force of such overwhelming magnitude and gravity as to warrant the horrors and brutality of military opposition to it?
- g. Has the decision to engage in war been taken legally by a legitimate government?
- h. Are the means of warfare employed or likely to be employed by our nation in fair proportion to the evil or aggression of the opposing forces? Is our nation resolved to employ minimum necessary force?

- i. In the course of the war has our nation been proposing and encouraging negotiations for peace or has it spurned such moves by opposing forces or by neutral nations or international organizations?

Mr. Antonides might point to Saddam Hussein's record of war-making and repression and note that he has violated perhaps every single one of these points. But it's not Saddam Hussein's forces that are now massed on the border of another country. And surely Canada, the United States and other Western nations must hold themselves to a higher standard of behavior than that of Saddam Hussein. The sins of Saddam Hussein do not justify the disproportionate taking of Iraqi civilian life, the further destruction of a nation's infrastructure, the taking of oilfields for economic advantage, or the potential use of nuclear weapons (as threatened by Bush and Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon).

Mr. Antonides accuses those who oppose the war — particularly those who travel to Iraq and "befriend the bullies of that nation" — of being blind to Saddam's evils and the suffering of the Iraqi people. I reject that charge.

**Many other forces at play**

Furthermore, Mr. Antonides is being intellectually dishonest in arguing for war on humanitarian grounds without touching on the many other forces at play in the current situation, let alone the possible consequences of war on Iraq. Interwoven in this grand drama are

vast Iraqi oil reserves, the U.S. rejection of a homeland for the oft-persecuted Kurds for geopolitical reasons, the further disproportionate loss of life among the Iraqi civilian population, the desire to re-draw the map of an entire region, the post-Saddam plan, etc.

Christian proponents of war should be very careful they are not supporting a militaristic adventure dressed up in the cloak of "just war theory."

James Kwantes,  
Red Deer, Alta.

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## Birthdays

We, the friends of  
**John Verburg**

wish him a very  
**HAPPY 92nd BIRTHDAY**  
 on March 22, 2003.  
 May the Lord continue to grant you  
 health and be your strength as you  
 enter another year.

Home address: RR#1  
 Blenheim, ON N0P 1A0



With praise and glory to God, we the  
 children and grandchildren of

## PETER and JOHANNA CUPIDO

invite you to celebrate with us, their  
 50th wedding anniversary.

"For here we do not have  
 an enduring city, but we are looking  
 for the city that is to come."

Hebrews 13:14

Join us for an Open House on April 5,  
 from 1-3 p.m. at the Immanuel  
 Christian Reformed Church,  
 3020 51st Street, Calgary, Alberta

Home Address:  
 31 Christie Garden SW  
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1953 March 24 2003  
 Sterling, Ont. Tillsonburg, Ont.  
 "The Lord is my helper,

I will not be afraid." Hebrews 13:6  
 With praise and thankfulness to God,  
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## HENRY and WILLY ZOMER

Congratulations and love from your  
 children and grandchildren

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 Janet & Dale Beer - Waterloo, ON  
 Matthew, Jacob, Emily  
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## Obituary

April 2, 1932 February 22, 2003  
 Warffum, Groningen Lindsay  
 The Netherlands Ontario

## KOOS (JACK) BOS

Koos Bos was taken to his heavenly  
 home at the age of 70. Dear husband  
 of Roelie (nee Broekema) for 45  
 years. He will also be missed and re-  
 membered with love by his children  
 and grandchildren:

John & Norma Bos - Oshawa, ON  
 Melanie, Kevin  
 Annette & Harry Koerssen  
 Newcastle, ON  
 Rachel, Jonathan, Michelle  
 Bruce & Melanie Bos - Oshawa, ON  
 Christina, Justin

Also survived by 6 brothers and 1  
 sister in The Netherlands and his  
 brother-in-law, Bert Ysinga of  
 Branchton, Ontario and his family.  
 Memorial service was held on  
 Tuesday, February 25, 2003 at the  
 Lindsay Christian Reformed Church  
 with Pastor Ron Luchies presiding. If  
 desired, memorial donations in Koos'  
 memory may be made to the Heart  
 and Stroke Foundation or the Lindsay  
 Christian Reformed Church.

Correspondence address:

Roelie Bos  
 Apt. 212,  
 133 Colborne St. W.  
 Lindsay ON K9V 3P6

After a short battle with cancer, our  
 dear friend

## DENNIS (THUEN) POSTHUMUS

was taken home to be with his Lord on  
 March 4. May God comfort his wife  
 Tilly, their children, grandchildren and  
 all who are affected by his passing.  
 He will be sadly missed by Andy and  
 Hammy Devries, Clarence and Etty  
 Devries, Jan and Thea Oegema,  
 Henry and Jean Semplonius.

## Wanted to buy



I am a longtime student of cults, reading pro-cult literature, have attended their worship services, and talked directly to J.W.s and L.D.S. If anyone has the out of print book "Chaos of the Cults" by the late Rev. VanBaalen, I'll pay asking price + postage.  
 Contact Peter Tensen,  
 R.R. 2, Brantford, ON N3T 5L5 or  
 Phone: 519-446-2333.



On March 13th, 2003, our mom and  
 beppe

## Clara Brouwer

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 love and thank you God for giving her  
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Her children

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 Happy Birthday Beppe from all your  
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Open House on April 5, 2003 at First  
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 O Most High" Psalm 92:1

With thanks to God for His steadfast  
 love and faithfulness, we rejoice and  
 celebrate, with our parents, their  
 50 years of marriage

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 Henry & Evelina - North Augusta  
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Qualified candidates should, before **August 1, 2003**, send a letter of application, CV and names of three references to:

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John Van Pelt  
**Chatham Christian High School**  
 475 Keil Dr. South  
 Chatham, ON N7M 6L8  
 Ph: 519-352-4980 Fax: 519-352-4041  
 E-mail:  
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Martin Folkerts, Principal,  
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 Tel/Fax: (613) 722-5836  
 Email: [paul@ocschool.org](mailto:paul@ocschool.org)  
 Website: [www.ocschool.org](http://www.ocschool.org)

**TRENTON, Ontario**  
**Trenton Christian School** invites applications for qualified teachers to fill a maternity leave beginning May 1, 2003 for a Junior Grade. There may also be openings for the school year 2003-04. Strengths in Music, Science, or PE will be an asset. Please send letter of application, resumes, inquiries, etc., to:

**TRENTON CHRISTIAN SCHOOL**  
 340 Second Dug Hill Rd. RR #4  
 Trenton ON K8V 5P7  
 (P) 613-392-3600  
 (F) 613-392-6316

**Langley Christian Middle/High School**

(Grades 7 - 12 with 430+ students)  
 is accepting applications for **Principal**. Position begins Aug. 2004.

Relevant experience and a Master's Degree  
 (or near completion) is required.

For more information go to [www.langleychristian.com](http://www.langleychristian.com) or contact  
**Rudy Ydenberg, Search Committee Chair**  
 c/o 22702 - 48<sup>th</sup> Ave, Langley BC V2Z 2T6  
 604 533 0839

**DELTA, British Columbia**

**Delta Christian School** is accepting applications for **Principal**. DCS is a Preschool-Grade 7 school of approximately 225 students. Ideal candidate should have excellent interpersonal, communication and leadership skills. Please include resume, statement of faith and educational philosophy. This position will start Aug. 2003.

Please send applications to:

Darrell Renkema, Board Chair  
**Delta Christian School**  
 4789 53 Street  
 Delta, BC V4K 2Y9

For more info call school office at  
 (604) 946 2514 or visit  
[www.deltachristianschool.com](http://www.deltachristianschool.com)

**PONOKA, Alberta**

**Ponoka Christian School**, a small Christian school located 1 hour south of Edmonton, Alberta, invites applications for definite openings in our primary and junior high divisions and a possible opening in our intermediate division for the 2003/2004 school year. Applicants should be committed Christian teachers with an understanding of and commitment to reformed Christian education. Please direct inquiries and/or applications to:

Mr. R. Duggan, Principal  
 403 783-6563 or  
 fax a resumé to 403 783-6687.

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Please send resume and inquiries to:

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 519-337-4660 or email: [artc@rivernet.net](mailto:artc@rivernet.net)

**BOWMANVILLE, Ontario**  
**Durham Christian High School**

Full time positions in  
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 Inquires to:

Mr. Fred Spoelstra, Principal  
**Durham Christian High School**  
 340 Scugog St.  
 Bowmanville, ON L1C 3K2  
 Telephone: 905-623-5940  
 Fax: 905-623-6258  
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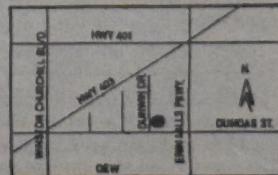
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## Classifieds

## Job Opportunities

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Christian University Education

## VICE PRESIDENT ACADEMIC

The King's University College, a young and growing Christian liberal arts and sciences institution, is seeking a Vice President Academic. The successful applicant, as Chief Academic Officer, will report to the President and will preside over all academic affairs in the institution. He/she is responsible for fostering a clear and engaging vision for Christian university education, for review and development of curriculum, for oversight of faculty members, for recruitment of faculty, and for maintaining relations of an academic nature with other universities and government agencies. The VP Academic will work closely with the faculty to achieve institutional academic strategies.

The King's University College's mission is to provide teaching and learning, research, and service to the community based on a transforming engagement with our culture, and animated by a Reformed understanding of the Christian's task in the world. King's offers undergraduate degrees in the arts and sciences, business, and education. Enrollment stands at 630 students, and is growing rapidly, as the institution moves into a challenging new phase of its development.

To be considered for appointment, a candidate must endorse the Mission Statement and the Statement of Faith of The King's University College, and demonstrate a clear understanding of their implications for academic life at the institution.

## Qualifications:

- Significant experience in university-level teaching and research, preferably in a Christian higher education setting; doctorate or equivalent
- Strong commitment to Christian university education, and ability to provide leadership in this area
- Experience in academic administration and leadership
- Strong interpersonal and leadership skills

Starting Date: July 1, 2004

Review of applications will begin April 15, 2003, and continue until the position is filled. In accordance with Canadian immigration requirements, this advertisement is directed first to Canadian citizens and permanent residents of Canada. Applicants are to send applications with complete Curriculum Vitae in confidence to:

**Dr. Henk W. H. Van Andel, President & Chair of the Search Committee**  
The King's University College 9125 50th Street  
Edmonton, AB T6B 2H3 Canada

[www.kingsu.ca](http://www.kingsu.ca)

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- Support to Caregiver – caregiver roles, crisis management, communication and decision-making
- Long Term Care Planning – e.g. placement planning

## QUALIFICATIONS:

- graduate of a Social Work degree, course or equivalent
- Experience with Seniors
- Dutch speaking a definite asset

## SEND OR FAX APPLICATION TO:

**John Kalverda, Executive Director**  
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Fax: (905) 459 – 8667

## Church Events

**The Transcona CRC**  
(Winnipeg, Manitoba) will be celebrating its 50th Anniversary. A weekend of praise, thanksgiving and fellowship is planned for October 10 - 14, 2003.

All former and present members and friends are welcome to join us in this celebration. For more information call: Bev Steendam at 204-853-2150 or e-mail [jsteenda@mts.net](mailto:jsteenda@mts.net)

Check our our website for JOB OPPORTUNITIES taken from the latest issues of *Christian Courier*:  
[www.christiancourier.ca/Jobs.htm](http://www.christiancourier.ca/Jobs.htm)



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## Spring Concerts of Praise

by the  
Choirs, concert band & Kooij Sisters  
of the

## Ontario Christian Music Assembly

Under the direction of Leendert Kooij  
With Andre Knevel at the organ 7:30 p.m.

ADMISSION: Adults \$10.00 Children under 12 – FREE

April 5

Emmanuel Canadian

Reformed Church

GUELPH

(519)821-9384 (For all concerts call OCMA (416)636-9779)

April 12

Springdale CRC

BRADFORD

(905)775-2230

(613)392-4110

April 26

King St. United

TRENTON

The Maranatha Christian Reformed Church  
of Edmonton, Alberta

will be celebrating its 50th anniversary on May 16 - 18, 2003. We invite all former pastors and members to join us in celebrating.

"God Faithfulness Through the Generations".

For more information please visit our website at:

[members.shaw.ca/maranatha\\_edmonton.50th/](http://members.shaw.ca/maranatha_edmonton.50th/)

For tickets to the banquet please call Edie Boonstra at 780-477-8617

or email: [maranatha\\_edmonton.50th@shaw.ca](mailto:maranatha_edmonton.50th@shaw.ca)

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Dutch Heritage Pages book catalogue

## Events/Advertising

## Calendar of Events

Items appearing in this column are run free of charge if they advertise an admission-free event, if they accompany an ad for the same event, or at the discretion of CC. In case of free listing, space limitations apply. The charge otherwise is \$7.50 per line, or \$1.50 per 1/3 line, per insertion.

Mar 16	Dordt College Concert Band, Chamber Orchestra Spring Tour- Hamilton, Ont. Redeemer University College 7:30 - See ad Mar 3.
Mar 17	Dordt College Concert Band, Chamber Orchestra Spring Tour - Vergennes, VT- 7:30 Champlain Valley CRC. - See ad March 3 for details.
Mar 19	Dordt College Concert Band, Chamber Orchestra Spring Tour- North Haledon, NJ - 7:30 Covenant CRC.
Mar 21	Dordt College Concert Band, Chamber Orchestra Spring Tour - Raccoon Township, PA- Mt. Pleasant Presbyterian Church - 7:30 See ad March 3 for details.
Mar 22	Dordt College Concert Band, Chamber Orchestra Spring Tour- Crown Point, IN 7:30 First CRC.
Mar 28	Dordt College Concert Band, Chamber Orchestra Spring Tour- Sioux Center, IA 7:30 B.J. Haan Auditorium
Apr 5	Family Outreach Ontario Conference. Theme: Sharing Strength and Hope for Recovery from chemical dependencies. Keynote Speaker: Glenn Allan, Bethel CRC, Newmarket. 8:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Apr 5	Spring Concert of Praise by the Ontario Christian Music Assembly, Leendert Kooij director, Andre Knevel, organ; in the Emmanuel Canadian Reformed Church Guelph @ 7:30 Tickets \$10, Children under 12 - Free. Call (519) 821-9384
Apr 10	Christian School Science Fair-Opening program with "The Magic of Molecules" 7:30 pm Redeemer University College auditorium, Ancaster, Ont.
Apr 11	Open House-Christian School Science Fair exhibits, from noon until 7pm. Redeemer University College Spring Concert of Praise by the Ontario Christian Music Assembly, Leendert Kooij director, Andre Knevel, organ; in the Springdale CRC @ 7:30. Tickets \$10, Children under 12 - Free. Call (905) 775-2230.
Apr 12	Forest Christian Reformed Church in Forest, Ontario, will celebrate 50 years of blessings. Program will begin at 6:30 PM with Open House to follow. Dinner tickets are available. Call (519) 786-4082
Apr 26	Spring Concert of Praise by the Ontario Christian Music Assembly, Leendert Kooij director, Andre Knevel, organ; in the King St. United Church, Trenton @ 7:30 p.m. Tickets \$10, Children under 12 - Free. Call (613) 392-4110
Apr 26, 27	Zion Christian Reformed Church, Pembroke, Ont., 50th anniversary. Sat. - tea social, banquet, evening program. Sun. - thanksgiving service. Call (613) 582-3263 for info & banquet. See ad Mar.3 issue.
May 3	Calvin Christian School, 547 West 5th St. Hamilton, Ont. Celebrating 50th anniversary. Open house at the school from 11a.m. - 3 p.m. Dinner at Michelangelo's Banquet Ctr. At 6:30 p.m. \$40.00 pp. Social at 5:30. To order tickets, send names & cheque to Ena Mostert, 22 Ambassador Dr. Hamilton, ON L9C 2N8. Sarnia Christian School, Sarnia, Ont. 50 th 2-4 p.m. open house. Dinner/program 5:30 Contact 519-383-7750 or odolphi@lkdsb.net See ad this issue.
May 3	Liberation Choir Concert, Hamilton Place, Hamilton with Guelph Symphony Orchestra. 7:30 pm. See ad this issue for details.
May 11, 12	Beth-El CRC 365 Queen St. E. Acton, Ontario, 50th anniversary. Sat. 3:00 p.m. for a Social Hour, then a banquet & evening program. Sunday - special thanksgiving service. For info: 519-853-0991 E-mail kenk@maple.ca (RSVP re Banquet) See ad this issue.
May 16, 17, 18	The Maranatha Christian Reformed Church of Edmonton, Alberta, 50th anniversary. For more info, visit our website: members.shaw.ca/maranatha_edmonton.50th/ For banquet tickets call Edie Boonstra at 780-477-8617 or email: maranatha_edmonton.50th@shaw.ca See ad this issue.
Oct 10-14	The Transcona CRC (Winnipeg, Manitoba) will be celebrating its 50th Anniversary with praise, thanksgiving & fellowship. For info call: Bev Steendam at 204-853-2150 or jsteenda@mts.net

**Christian Courier** helps Christians across North America apply their living faith to the business of living. Your donation to **Reformed Faith Witness** supports this ministry. Along with our thanks we'll send you a tax receipt for donations of \$10 (Cdn.) or more. Our address is:

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**10th ANNIVERSARY**

**LIBERATION CHOIR CONCERT**

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With the

**Guelph Symphony Orchestra**

Conductor: Simon Irving

Organ & Grand Piano: Andre Knevel

Soprano Soloist: Colleen Greidanus

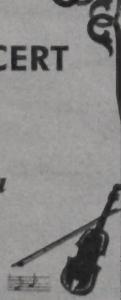
**SATURDAY MAY 3, 2003 - 7:30 P.M.**

At

**Hamilton Place, Hamilton, Ontario**

For tickets call: 905-631-1929

Or e-mail: paula@organs.ca Tickets: \$25.00 / \$35.00



**"How Priceless is God's Unfailing Love"**

**Bethel CRC** of Lacombe, Alberta will be celebrating their 50th anniversary. A weekend of praise, thanksgiving and fellowship is planned for **December 5, 6, & 7, 2003**. All former and present members and friends are invited to join us in this celebration. For more information, call: Eleanor Wildeboer at 403-782-2602 or e-mail wilewildeboer@aol.com

**50th Anniversary**

With thanksgiving to the Lord, the

**ZION CHRISTIAN REFORMED CHURCH,**

Pembroke, Ontario

hopes D.V. to celebrate its 50th anniversary on Saturday and Sunday, **April 26 & 27, 2003**. Former pastors and members are invited to join us on Saturday from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. for a *tea social*, later followed by a *banquet* and *evening program*. On Sunday a *special thanksgiving service* will be held. Call for further information. To attend the banquet, RSVP before April 7. **Phone: (613) 582-3263**

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## News

# A HANDS-on experience in the Dominican Republic

## Alan Doerkson

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. — Traveling to developing countries to help build Christian schools can be an eye-opening experience which can enlarge our world, says Rev. John Postuma, director of ministry development for Worldwide Christian Schools (WCS) in Canada. He knows this from experience, because last month, Postuma himself took part in one of the agency's HANDS (Helping Another Nation Develop Schools) projects in the Dominican Republic.

"I wanted to have the hands-on experience — it was the first one for me," explains Postuma. Although this was his first HANDS project, he has previously traveled with the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee to Africa, where he saw "the poorest of the poor."

HANDS projects consist of teams of 12 going to one developing country to build a Christian school, explains Postuma. The Canadian branch of WCS focuses on sending teams to Central America (including the Caribbean). "We like to work with a team of 12 — it's best for logistics," says Postuma. For one thing, it is easy to transport groups of 12 in a single van.

The latest HANDS team from Canada traveled to the city of Bermejo, in the Dominican, Jan. 25, returning February 8. This group of 12 volunteers came from Christian Reformed churches mostly in the Niagara region, along with some from Kingston, Georgetown and Simcoe, Ont. This team got started after Postuma spoke recently with the CRC's Classis Niagara about the work of WCS. Notices were placed in church bulletins in the region, and soon WCS had a team of volunteers ready to go to the Dominican.

## Constructive involvement

The volunteers built classrooms for Grades 6 to 8 at a Christian school in the Dominican, working with blocks, lintels and trusses.

"There is already a Christian school in Bermejo, but the facilities are too small to accommodate the students," explains Postuma. "It was time to expand the school. In Bermejo, they planned to add Grades 6 to 8, and therefore needed additional facilities."

"This was the first time that I ever had the experience of mason work," he admits. "I was given a trowel, a bucket of mortar and a pile of cement blocks, and told to go to it. I quickly realized that if I was going to learn the art of laying blocks, I'd better get some help! Thankfully, George Lunshof, from Dunnville, was willing to take me under his apprenticeship."



PHOTOS COURTESY REV. JON POSTUMA

Hard-working Haitians mixing cement for the school's addition.

"We worked hard for 10 days, and when we left we had built a solid structure. But we did more than just put up a building. We had fun and good fellowship. We shared and sang together. We read the Scriptures and prayed together. We had our comfort zones stretched as we were exposed to a totally different culture and customs."

Postuma observes, "There was such bonding with the people of Bermejo, especially the children.... The children demonstrated such exuberance, and it was contagious to be with them. In fact, it was hard to leave.... There was a sense of such joy in these children even though the living conditions were so limited, so poor."

Before the Canadian team left, their Dominican hosts held a dedication service for the new building. The school's superintendent noted, "For years we've seen an empty field where the new building now stands. HANDS volunteers showed the love of the Lord through their work." Postuma reports that the superintendent "expressed with joy that the Lord is so faithful. The Lord is so good."

Postuma enjoyed being part of the Dominican project and observes, "The highlights for me were, first of all, the hands-on experience; to meet the missionaries and see their dedication; the fellowship with our team — the sharing together with our devotions."

"What really struck me," he adds, "was the dedication of the Christian teachers.... They are so committed to the Lord and the cause of Christian education.... They provide such wonderful leadership for the schools."

"We often asked each other in our group, 'Why did we come?' Why should we encourage others to consider a trip to a developing country? There is no question about it, the blessings are many. It really opened our eyes to see what

the Holy Spirit is doing in other countries through the preaching of the Gospel. It allowed me, personally, to experience the impact and to see the difference that WCS makes in the lives of thousands of children around the world. For this I praise the Lord!"

Construction work is one of the main components of most HANDS projects. But WCS also does teacher training and professional development, developing of school curricula, and school sponsorship — "in which we 'bridge' with a school in a Third World country," and contribute to its tuition costs, explains Postuma

Postuma explains that WCS is interdenominational, and HANDS team members come from a variety of churches. For instance, an earlier HANDS team to work in the Dominican was from a Pentecostal congregation in Ottawa. After the Canadian team finished its work, a HANDS team from Michigan arrived to continue the construction.

## Sheer adventure

Postuma is enthusiastic about HANDS projects, and it is obvious that enthusiasm is shared by team members. "It's exciting to see so

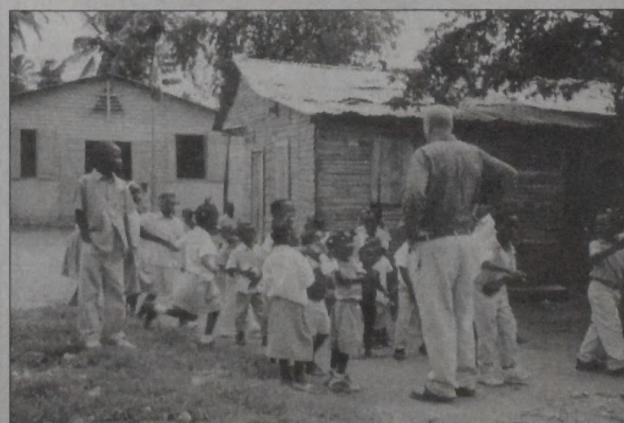
many people committed to Third World development," he says. While many Christians receive printed information about mission and relief work, that cannot match a HANDS-on experience, according to Postuma. "The sheer adventure of being in another country is exciting.... When we've been there, it's an eye-opener.... The fellowship, the fun — to see the Holy Spirit at work is exciting."

Most HANDS projects are seven to 14 days long, according to the HANDS guidebook. That includes travel time, one or two worship times, and a day to experience the culture of the host family.

HANDS teams are open to Christians aged 16 and older (WCS considers 14-to-16-year-olds if accompanied by a parent or guardian), and WCS encourages retirees to apply their experience and talents to projects. WCS asks volunteers to do fundraising for their support, and offers suggestions for doing so.

WCS has expectations of conduct for volunteers, which encourage them to be culturally sensitive, to display Christ's image in their acts of service, and to respect the standards and mores of the people they serve. "Quality work speaks volumes to local people," emphasizes the HANDS guidebook. "A good rule of thumb is: 'If it is not good enough for your own home or your own church, it's not good enough for the site at which you are working.'" Teamwork is "of primary importance on a HANDS team. We accomplish so much more working together, using the gifts which God has given us to his glory."

WCS is an international, non-denominational and evangelical agency which was started in Grand Rapids, Mich., in the late 1980s. The agency started working in Canada in the early '90s.



Max Van Til, CRC world mission co-ordinator in the Dominican Republic, in front of the CRC in Batey Cea, with local children.

## News Digest

### Vegetable orchestra

LONDON, England (Reuters) — The First Vienna Vegetable Orchestra really cooks up a storm, with its carrot flutes, leek violins, celery bongos and aubergine cymbals. Supported by the occasional use of kitchen utensils such as spoons and food processors, the orchestra has been a hit in its hometown Vienna, and also performed in February in London, England.

The inspiration for veggie music came from listening to the sound of vegetables being chopped.

Before each performance, the band tours local markets to find fresh vegetables of just the right calibre and quality.

Once the instruments are worn out, the musicians, and a conductor who doubles as cook, toss each one into a stewpot to make soup — to be enjoyed by the audience after the concert.

### Robot for grandparents

TORONTO — A child-like robot that combines the roles of nurse, companion and security guard has been developed by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries of Japan. The Wakamaru robot can patrol a house 24 hours a day, alerting family, hospitals and security firms if it perceives a problem, reports *The Daily Telegraph* and the *Globe and Mail*. It will, for example, call relatives if its owner collapses or fails to get out of the bath.

The one-metre-tall robot can be set to remind forgetful people when it is time to take medicine, eat and sleep. The Wakamaru, which speaks with the voice of either a boy or a girl, is also designed to greet its owner when he or she comes home.

### Armada of ducks

LONDON, England — An armada of 29,000 plastic toy ducks are bobbing their way toward the coast of Britain, *The Times* newspaper said recently.

"Britain should be put on duck alert," Dr. Curtis Ebbesmeyer, an oceanographer from Seattle, who has been using computer simulation to track the toys, told the newspaper.

The animals, which also include some blue turtles, red beavers and green frogs, were washed overboard in heavy seas from a container ship in the north Pacific in January 1992.

They had been frozen in the Arctic sea but are expected to be carried south by the Gulf Stream, completing their 12,000-mile voyage on the British and Irish coasts.